

# UPTOWN

## *My Name Is Prince*

A Commentary on the Name Changes

## *Days Of Wild And Beautiful Nights*

Celebrating Prince

## *Everybody Want What They Don't Got*

Thoughts on the Projected *Crystal Ball Volume II* Set

## *The Lost Is Found*

Additional and Revised *Days Of Wild* Details

# *This Is Now!*

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# #44

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Hi there again!

It has been several months since the latest issue of UPTOWN was published. We had initially planned to publish issue #43 in July/August, but we felt it made sense to wait until September, when things get back to normal, at least here in Europe where most people spend July and August vacationing. But instead of publishing an issue at the start of September and another in late September (when #44 was due), we made the decision to publish them simultaneously, much like we used to do when we published yearly "special issues." So here they are then, issue #43 and #44!

Subtitled "...That Was Then" (borrowing a line from the song "Now"), issue #43 is the "nostalgic," "past-dwelling" issue, focusing on articles about Prince's glorious past. *Take This Beat* is part two of our interview with Bobby Z. (the first part was published in UPTOWN #42). This second part focuses on the Revolution years. *Grooves And Grooves Upon The Shelf* is a survey of outtakes, updating the information from the *TURN IT UP* book. It provides details and descriptions of outtakes that have emerged since *TURN IT UP* was released in late 1997. Similarly, the article *2night We Video* updates a feature from UPTOWN #23 (April 1996) on Prince's video clips. Accompanying the article is a comprehensive Prince video and filmography, listing all his video clips, motion pictures, TV films, and officially released home videos. *High On You* chronicles the rise and fall of Sly and The Family Stone, one of Prince's most important musical influences. The impact of Sly and The Family Stone on Prince is undeniable; he has performed more songs by this group than any other and he has always wanted his music and backing

groups to defy categorisation by transcending gender, racial, and musical barriers in the manner of Sly and The Family Stone.

Issue #44 is the "This Is Now!" issue, containing articles on Prince's current activities and all the latest news. A large portion of the issue is devoted to the "Prince Celebrations" activities in June: *Days Of Wild And Beautiful Nights* contains reports and recollections from several of our friends who attended the event when Prince opened the doors of Paisley Park for nightly parties and daily tours of the Paisley Park studios. The highlight was a unique Prince performance at the Northrop Auditorium, June 13th, which saw him reuniting with three former Revolution members on a take on "America." Meanwhile, *Everybody Want What They Don't Got* discusses the projected *Crystal Ball Volume II* set. This article offers some ideas for the projected follow-up and discusses the songs that fans could vote for at the "Prince Celebration" week. *The Lost Is Found* contains additional and revised information for the *DAYS OF WILD* book, providing new facts and details that we have been able to unearth since the book was released in April 2000. *My Name Is Prince* is a commentary on the recent name change back to Prince.

We plan to publish issue #45 according to schedule in late November. Work is already in progress on several articles, including a *Graffiti Bridge* album study and an in-depth look at the Madhouse project and Prince's work with Miles Davis. Work is also underway on the promised *Lovesexy* tour report, but it is a huge project that will take the rest of the year to complete so don't expect anything until 2001. In the meantime, enjoy issue #43 and #44!

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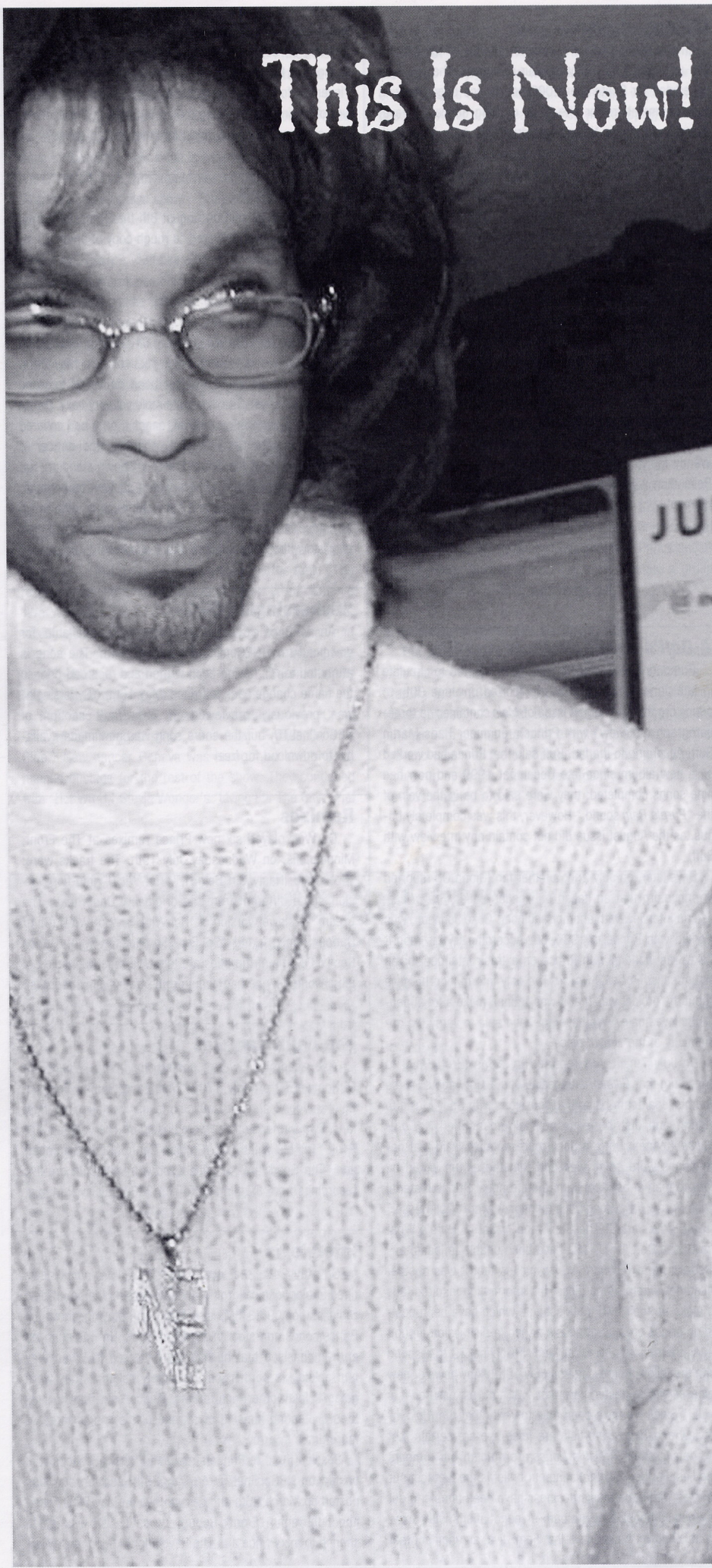
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THE INDEPENDENT, UNOFFICIAL AND UNCENSORED MAGAZINE EXPLORING THE MUSICAL WORLD OF PRINCE

# UPROCK





## Change of plans

In mid-May, a concert promoter offered Prince \$8 million upfront for a 20-city US tour of arenas. The tour was scheduled for September 2000 and Prince began looking for new members for The NPG, drafting dancer Geneva, woodwinds player Najee, and drummer John Blackwell. However, instead of starting rehearsals and going ahead with the plans, Prince made the decision to put the tour on hold. Prince expressed to the concert promoter that he did not feel good about touring without a record.

Most of the early-morning jams Prince has played at Paisley Park during the summer have been with only Kirk Johnson and Morris Hayes. Larry Graham is into his Bible studies and Prince rarely calls him for these jams. It is known that Larry has had some religious objections to playing some of Prince's songs, so it is not unlikely that he is on his way out from the band.

## Revolution reunion?

*Minneapolis Star Tribune* reported on July 23rd that Wendy Melvoin was in town to discuss a reunion of The Revolution with Prince. There are no more details at the moment.

## A Doll's House rumours and lies

Rumours about Prince's next album started to circulate in late June. A fan (A. Waller) reported on June 30th to prince.org that the August issue of *Mojo* contained "a three-paragraph interview" with Prince's engineer Hans-Martin Buff. According to the fan, Buff said that Prince had worked on a new album since late December 1999 and now had nine songs completed; they were said to be in the vein of the "*Purple Rain* sound." However, this was completely bogus, as the August issue did not contain any interview with Buff.

Days later, on July 2nd, another fan (Gloria G.) reported to prince.org that an Italian publication called *Bravo!* carried an interview with another engineer, Coke Johnson, who worked with Prince in 1985-86. According to this report, Coke was working with Prince on a track intended for an album called *A Doll's House*. The only information he gave about the project was that it was "gonna make a lot of people believe again." We have not been able to verify the authenticity of the *Bravo!* piece.

On July 7th, it was reported by a fan (Brett Cain) to prince.org that *Billboard* magazine had a story about Prince and his legal team being in discussions with Sony Music to market and distribute his next album entitled *A Doll's House*. Kenneth Berg, a Sony representative, said that negotiations were going well and that the album would be easy to market as it contains the strongest Prince material since *Purple Rain*. Song titles mentioned were "Doll House," "The Purple Part Of The Sun," and "I Got U, Here's What I'm Gonna Do With U." We have been unable to locate any such article in *Billboard*, which means that it was another faked news item. Regardless, the information inspired fans to make up their own track listings, which have been posted on prince.org and alt.music.prince (a discussion group).

All the rumours eventually led NPGonlineLTD to respond with the following message on July 10th: "Any news of new releases will be posted here first... If not, rest assured it is a LIE." Since we have been able to verify that the *Mojo* interview and *Billboard* article are false, we are certain that the details about *A Doll's House* are nothing but rumours and lies. Further substantiating our belief is the fact that our sources within the music business have been unable to get any details about a new album or negotiations with Sony. What is known, however, is that Femi Jiya, an engineer that

worked with Prince in 1988-89, is back at Paisley Park, working on sessions with Prince. The question remains, though, as to why Prince fans would go to such lengths to "invent" information and mislead other fans? Is it the pleasure of seeing others being fooled and seeing the speculation one small piece of (mis-) information can cause?

## New album?

NPGonlineLTD said on August 8th that Prince's current engineer Femi Jiya delivered "a rough copy of another new album at the gate of Prince's estate."

## New video

The video for "Hot Wit U (Nasty Girl Mix)" premiered on the Real Networks website (www.real.com) on May 24th. The self-directed video has not been delivered to video channels as of yet. The video is simple yet very sexy. Dancer Desray is featured in a bikini, dancing on a bed covered with cream. Another unknown, scantily clad dancer is shown throughout the video. Prince is shown standing, hat in hand, singing to the camera with a sly look on his face. Despite its effectiveness and sexy nature, it is unknown if any video station other than BET will add the song to their playlists without the support of a major record company.

## "Cybersingle" MP3

An MP3 of "Cybersingle" was made available for download from NPGonlineLTD on July 14th. The song is attributed to ♪, having been written and recorded prior to the name change back to Prince (May 16th). "Cybersingle" was previously previewed in The Vault section of NPGonlineLTD, but the entire song was now made available to download for free.

## Remixes

DJ Wolf played six new Prince remixes at The Front, Minneapolis, on Wednesday July 19th. The tracks were: "Hot Wit U (Nasty Girl Remix)," "Hot Wit U" (hip-hop version, quite different from the original), "Underneath The Cream" (a slower version of "Hot Wit U"), "Hot Wit U (Club/Dance Remix)," and "So Far, So Pleased (Club/Dance Remix)." Some of the titles are tentative. The DJ would not tell anyone how he had acquired the tracks (vinyl records).

## The Vault samples

Two samples were posted on The Vault on NPGonlineLTD on July 17th: "Mad" and "Funky Design." Both are identical to the studio outtakes circulating amongst fans. Two further samples were posted on The Vault on July 21st: "Tell Me What It Is" (Graham Central Station number) and "The Good Life" (not the *Exodus* track). Both are live recordings from the July 15th (am) 2000 Paisley Park gig.

## Interviews

On May 24th, the local KMSP-TV's 10 o'clock news aired a telephone call from Prince discussing the brand-new radio station, 96.3 FM, that had been playing about 10 Prince songs non-stop for almost a week. He was annoyed and emphasised that he had not endorsed it. When they had asked his permission, he simply asked if they were going to play other local artists. Prince said that he was tired of hearing himself, or anyone else's songs, three or more times in a row.

Session three of Prince's replies to fans' questions was posted on NPGonlineLTD on May 30th (session one was posted on March 26th and session two on May 5th). Asked about the song "Empty Room," he said, "If I ever get a chance to mix Prince and The Revolution's *Roadhouse Gar-*

*den*, that cut will definitely get a shot. I really do believe that good music appreciates, so I continue to write and record new things in the knowledge that all good things come in time." Will he ever release "Moonbeam Levels"? - "Definitely... one of my favourites as well." Is he planning to release *Purple Rain* with outtakes included? - "To my knowledge, there were no outtakes from that album... Most of it being recorded live." Is he planning an MTV Unplugged performance in the future? - "MTV hates me." Does he think that the religious message in his work is alienating a part of his audience? - "We only seek to enlighten. Our purpose is not to alienate but to awaken."

Prince gave an interview to KMSP-TV on June 1st to promote the Prince: A Celebration event. "Paisley Park is pretty much representative of everything I am musically," he said. "I don't mind letting kids into something that they actually helped preserve. It's their continued support of my music that allows these doors to stay open." He talked about his love of Minneapolis and said that he kept his studio there so he wouldn't have to run back and forth to Los Angeles and New York, "I've found that you tend to reflect whatever it is that's around you. I wanted peace around me, so I stayed here so I could reflect peace. I needed a place like this to create."

Prince responded to questions from fans in an AOL webchat on June 8th. The chat began at 9:27 pm (EST), with approximately 7,000 fans in the auditorium. It ended around 10 pm. Prince attacked the current state of the music industry, declaring that music has reached an SOS ("same old shit") crisis, perpetuated by the industry itself. Asked about Napster, he said, "The cat is sorta outta the bag with that one. We are gonna one up Napster by delivering the latest grooves to our fans doorstep every month!". He said that Brown Mark left The Revolution in 1986 because he "knew the truth." He said the spirit moved him to "allow the many celebrations that usually occur all over the world to happen in my own backyard." Three polls were run during the chat. Eighty per cent said yes to the question, "Would you like to join a club called The New Power Generation that delivers all my latest?". Even more, 93 per cent, voted yes to the question, "Do you believe in God?", and 94 per cent replied in the affirmative to the question, "Do you stand with us in our fight to retain our master recordings from Time Warner?".

*St. Paul Pioneer Press* published an interview with Prince on July 28th. Prince spoke to the newspaper for an hour at Paisley Park (on July 27th) about Napster and the music industry. He wanted to turn the discussion to intellectual property and have recording artists dictate the manner in which that property, their music, is distributed. Any developments in digitally downloadable music led by "non-creative people," Prince said, are doomed to the fate that befell Napster. "The government is protecting the record companies, and anybody who steals from the record companies is going to get shut down. We're not saying we're pro-Napster or con-Napster. We're neutral in that situation. But who asked [artists] for our input?". Prince said that Napster and like-minded sites exist as an effect of the stranglehold major recording labels have on the music industry. Prince wants musicians to connect directly with fans in the commercial delivery of their music, to keep the art pure and prices low. He pointed to Stephen King's Internet-only release of his latest book as a model. However, he was vague on how new and unknown artists could sustain themselves without help or involvement of record companies. Emerging artists should focus first on their own communities, he suggested, before looking to expose wider audiences to their art. Prince's ideal has artists taking over every facet of the music-delivery process, including the manufacture of devices that play the music and control of radio stations. Industry standards, he added, would be decided by a commission or board made up of established artists. He included himself, David Bowie, and members of Metallica as potential chairholders. "Somebody who doesn't make music



has no business talking about how it should [be delivered]. I'm talking about a power shift," he said. "Where is the system for independence? Let the artists fix it."

### Yahoo! Awards

Prince won the award for Best Internet Only Single with "One Song" at the Yahoo! Internet Life Online Music Awards, held at New York's Studio 54 on July 24th. The event was hosted by actor John Leguizamo and cybercast live on VH1.com. David Bowie won the award for Best Artist Site (Bowienet) and closed the show by performing two songs accompanied by a pianist. Prince didn't attend but sent a videotaped "thank you" message. It showed Prince sitting at the microphone at a studio console. A slow, funky beat accompanied his sung message, which included lines like, "I don't know why I win awards, I guess they don't know I only know two chords." He also sang something about being unemployed and how the award may get him signed again. The audience loved it and the host said that only Prince could make a "thank you" note sound so good.

### Genesis Awards

Prince's appearance on the Genesis Awards was broadcast on Animal Planet on June 10th [see *UPTOWN* #41 for full details on his appearance].

### Séptimo broadcast

The concert performance on *Séptimo* was broadcast by TV2, Spain, on August 9th. The concert was recorded during Prince's *Rave Un2 The Joy Fantastic* promo tour, in El Alamo, south of Madrid, Spain, November 22nd 1999.

### Paisley Park parties and concerts

Prince has performed in the Love 4 One Another room at Paisley Park several times since the May 13th (am) performance we reported on in *UPTOWN* #42. He played on Saturday morning on May 20th (am) and 27th (am). After a break for the Prince: A Celebration activities, the Friday night/Saturday morning concerts and parties, officially dubbed "Dance Tildawn" parties, continued on July 1st (am), followed by parties every Friday night/Saturday morning throughout July.

#### May 20th (am)

Prince played a concert at Paisley Park on Saturday morning, May 20th (am), "technically" his first as Prince since 1993. Doors opened around 1:15 am and about 100 people were let inside for a \$7 donation. The crowd eventually doubled to around 200 people. The party began shortly before 2:00 am with the showing of the video of "Hot Wit U."

At about 2:00 am, Prince, Morris Hayes, and Kirk Johnson entered the stage. They started playing a loop of "Everyday People," which led into a full rendition of "Forever In My Life." The band then went into a version of Bob Marley's "Waiting In Vain." The crowd was singing along with the song as Prince called them "the choir." Larry Graham appeared onstage during the number, looking like he had just woken up as he was wiping the sleep out of his eyes.

With Larry onstage they proceeded with "Everyday People" before previewing the new song "Peace." Prince then engaged in some keyboard playing before asking the crowd what they wanted to hear. Fans yelled out some interesting choices, including "Moonbeam Levels" and "Electric Inter-course." Prince finally chose to play "Adore." He only sang the chorus but it was one of the highlights of the set. The band continued with "The Jam," "Groove On," and "Hot Wit U," before closing the set with a half-hour take on "Mad." At the beginning of "Mad," a girl got up onstage and start-

ed dancing to the music. The song also showcased a guitar solo by Prince that made the crowd wild. Prince inserted snatches from the *Beverly Hillbillies* programme into "Mad." The show lasted just under two hours.

The party continued after the show was over. Prince played a new remix of "Hot Wit U" and even showed a new video of the remix. The video is based on the original "Hot Wit U" video, but with some new editing. The *Beautiful Strange* video was also shown. The party was over at 5:00 am.

#### May 27th (am)

The last performance before the Celebrations event took place the next week, Saturday morning, May 27th (am). Doors opened around 1:30 am and there was no charge. Prince was standing by the entrance watching as fans were entering the Love 4 One Another room.

After about two hours of DJing, shortly after 3:00 am. Morris Hayes took to the stage and started playing a loop of "Mad Sex." Prince and Kirk Johnson followed shortly after and the trio went into a full version of "Mad Sex." Prince left the stage after the first number, going to the soundboard, saying something like, "You didn't pay none, got in free? Didn't pay even two bucks? You don't understand, you don't want the funk... I'm gonna play techno." The audience responded with a resounding "no" and started a chant, "We need the funk, gotta have the funk." The response caused Kirk and Morris to play a bit of Clinton's "We Want The Funk." Prince then addressed the crowd, talking about the recent New York press conference and how the papers make up stories instead of conveying "the truth." He also mentioned Clive Davis' retirement. His speech lasted around five minutes.

Following the speech, the concert continued with "Come On," which included some lyrics from "Freaks On This Side." New dancer Geneva was brought up and she remained onstage for the rest of the show. They continued with "Hot Wit U," Stevie Wonder's "Living For The City," and

a bit of "Alphabet St.". Morris then started playing a loop of "Days Of Wild," which resulted in roars of approval from the crowd. They got even wilder as Prince reached for his one-eyed bass and launched into the song, which had not been played for a few years. Prince was slapping the bass so hard that he almost blew the speakers up. He sneaked some lyrics from "American Woman" into the song. The set was over at 4:20 am. Even though it was fairly short, many felt it was one of the best performances of the year thus far.

The party continued until 5:15 am. Prince played a video of "Hot Wit U" after the show. He mentioned the new Minneapolis R&B station, 96.3FM, that has been playing his music non-stop for several days, "Did y'all listen to 96.3? I didn't ask nothing. I ain't doing nothing. I never been on the radio that long. They've been playing my songs and brotha's not even getting a penny."

#### June 28th: NBA draft party

Prince hosted a party at Paisley Park on Wednesday, June 28th, following the annual NBA draft, which was held in Minneapolis. Basketball hoops were set up in the Soundstage and some basketball players were present. Fans could also get in but they had to pay \$25. At midnight, BKS (Best Kept Secret) took the stage. Prince was at the soundboard. Fonky Baldheads were next. Prince guested with them, playing some keyboards. Milenia, a group consisting of four sisters, performed last.

#### June 30th (am): Maceo Parker concert

The next night, Thursday, June 29th, Prince guested with Maceo Parker when he performed at Paisley Park. Starting at 12:30 am (Saturday morning, June 30th am), Maceo played for almost three hours. Prince got up and jammed with him on guitar for a while. He spent the rest of the show behind the soundboard, but now and then he would run up to the front of the stage and dance and clap, obviously having a great time.

## TRUTH OR CONJECTURE?

Prince in conversation with Barney Hoskyns of *Mojó*, published March 2000: "You think Susan Rogers knows me? You think she knows anything about my music? Susan Rogers, for the record, doesn't know anything about my music. Not one thing. The only person who knows anything about my music... is me. ... Lemme ask you something. What you wrote about me [referring to a previous article in *Mojó*], was that the truth or was it conjecture? And if conjecture is not the truth, then what is it? Isn't it just *lies*? Did you come to the source for the truth?"

Do you agree with Prince's reasoning here? Is he the only person who knows "the truth" about all aspects of his music? And is there really anything such as an "objective," "definitive" truth? Can we be sure that Prince is always telling the truth when he talks about his music? And do we always need to come to "the source" for the truth?

If Prince told Susan Rogers that "Starfish And Coffee" was inspired by Susannah Melvoin reminiscing about her schooldays, and Susan later relates this to a journalist — is this not "the truth"? Or at least is it not an attempt to arrive there? Or has it become "conjecture," because Susan is only *referring* to what Prince told her? Assuming that Susan isn't making things up (and why should she?), this must be "the truth," according to Prince's definition, since the source was Prince, right? Besides, Susan has an extraordinary memory and remembers nearly every session as well as each and every song she worked on during her four-year tenure as Prince's recording engineer.

So why does Prince say that Susan Rogers "doesn't know anything about [his] music"? Didn't he tell her the

truth about the music that he was working on when she was his engineer? Or does the truth evolve over time and change according to what you *want* it to be? Is life as black and white as Prince makes it out to be when he says that it's "just lies" if it isn't the truth? Could there be something in between?

To turn Prince's logic against him, he is offering his conjecture about Susan Rogers and those who discuss his work (like *UPTOWN*). Is he then not merely lying, as he accuses others? After all, when it comes to what Susan said, should we not turn to her, since she is the source of her own comments, in order to determine what the truth of her statements is? If Susan "knows nothing" about Prince's music, does not Prince more likely than not know even less about her integrity, honesty, knowledge, memory, and insight? Our conjecture here is that she was able and willing to pick up much more about Prince's music than he was in learning about her and the sort of person she was.

How truthful do you reckon a Prince autobiography would be? Do you think it would present the "objective" and "definitive" truth about himself or his music? Or would it be a highly subjective picture of what he *wants* the public to see and to know? But if it isn't the truth, isn't it "just lies"? Then what's the point of coming to "the source"? Can you get closer to the truth, or at least a more objective view, by talking to key people that Prince has worked with, even if some of what they say is based on their own impressions and "conjecture," rather than direct references to things that Prince has told them? You decide!



y 1st (am)

The first "Dance Tildawn" party at Paisley Park after the celebrations week happened on Saturday morning, July 1st (am). There was no charge to enter. The crowd was fairly small, around 100 people.

Milenia took the stage at 2:25 am. They sang the first song to backing tapes and loops. Then Morris Hayes and Kirk Johnson got onstage and started playing. Shortly afterwards, Prince literally ran up onstage and started playing keyboards. The trio backed the girls for two or three numbers.

Following a short break, Prince, Morris, and Kirk proceeded on their own by playing "Gett Off." Prince invited the girls onstage to dance. The Blackshire brothers followed with their "Dance With Me." Prince then grabbed the one-eyed bass and asked the crowd what they wanted to hear. Someone shouted "America." Prince said, "OK, Kirk?" and started playing a bit of "America." However, he stopped

the song after a couple of minutes, saying, "Naa, I don't like that. What else?" A few suggestions came out before someone said "Days Of Wild," and off they were. "Days Of Wild" closed the set.

#### July 2nd (am): George Clinton party

There was another Paisley Park party following George Clinton's concert at The Quest in Minneapolis, making it the fourth Paisley Park party in four days. Prince attended Clinton's show and brought him with him to Paisley Park at around 3:30 am. The party was very small (no cover charge), with only 15 fans or so and two security men in the Love 4 One Another room. Members of Milenia also attended.

At around 3:45 am, Prince came into the Love 4 One Another room and started to play the "Hot Wit U" remix video. Clinton also showed up, staying at the soundboard. When the DJ started playing Clinton songs, Clinton started

dancing, looking very happy. Prince also showed around 30 minutes of the Northrop concert on the video screen. Most people stopped dancing to watch the performance. Prince didn't like this and told the staff to turn the lights on and stop the party. There were only eight fans at that point. The party was over at 5:45 am.

#### July 8th (am)

Prince was back at Paisley Park the next week for another performance. The doors opened shortly after midnight, July 8th (am). There was a \$7 charge.

"Check, check... one, two, one, two," Prince said at the soundboard as Kirk Johnson and Morris Hayes came onstage at around 2:30 am. They played along to a tape of "Baby Knows" with Prince adjusting the sound. Prince jumped onstage five minutes later and joined them to play guitar on a full-length take on "Baby Knows." They extended the song with a long guitar solo at the end. Kip

### OPEN LETTER TO PRINCE:

## BEST GIFT YOU CAN GIVE IS A GREAT NEW RECORD

By Jim Walsh, pop music critic, *St. Paul Pioneer-Press*, June 2nd 2000

Prince, have I got that right? I hear that's what they're calling these days, because that's what you've told them to call you. Great news; people who haven't been interested in you for years are suddenly interested again. *Prince is back*, and all

Well, remember me? I'm the guy who, for the past seven years, has called you The Artist Formerly Known as Prince, The Artist TAFKAP and, once, Taffy. I'm the one who stuck my head in for you, who wrote all that glowing stuff in this newspaper and in the liner notes to your album *The Love Experience* (I got paid exactly one dollar because I didn't want to go to work with you), and now that we're on the cusp of your birthday Wednesday, and a sold-out weeklong party out at Paisley Park called "Prince: A Celebration," I need to ask you, exactly, are we celebrating?

Are we celebrating the fact that you haven't made a great record, one that the entire world cared about, in years? That your live show has turned into a stale, predictable — if phenomenally well-played, as always — set of oldies and covers? That several lesser lights have made off with your crown because you've been distracted from the task at hand (making music that describes *right now*) by music industry-grousing, religious changes, cryptic religious questions but no answers and over artistry?

Count me out even though my party invitation seems to have been lost in the mail. I'm probably on your enemies list because I was only moved by a few songs off your last records (*Rave Un2 The Joy Fantastic*, *Newpower Soul* and *Chaos Ball*), and I wrote as much.

Then again, maybe you're not mad at me. Maybe it's just that you've moved on, and you're done with me. But I'm not with you. I care too much, and your music has meant too much to me to stop caring now.

But there are plenty of people who don't care. Almost everyone I know thinks you're cooked. Don't you want to prove me wrong? Forget them, don't you want to surprise your fans? Don't you want to make one more record that nails it, that truly says something and feels innovative? Why don't you get really, truly, weird again — as weird as the times demand — and take us on another journey, not a flashback to the past?

Make no mistake, this is a challenge. I am writing to reach out to you. And it may be presumptuous for a lowly rock critic to attempt to tell one of the great artists of our time to wake up and smell the muse, but I happen to think that great artists are like great chefs: They've got all the skills and ingredients, but they don't know what we're hungry for if we don't tell them. And, given the state of mainstream music at the

moment, I am starved.

So here's the deal: For your birthday, I want a gift. I don't want an interview, or a tour of Paisley Park, or the hem of your garment. I want a great record. What you do best. Something real. Something that blows these say-nothing boy bands and bimbos, divas and playas, out of the water once and for all. And in case you haven't noticed, we could use it because these are strange days, indeed. To wit:

Last Friday, I was sitting at the Loring Bar watching a pretty cool jazz outfit, Moveable Feast and listening to DJ Wicked spin. Three of the four people I was with admitted that they walk around this town in fear of getting shot. What is that? And why haven't we heard from you on it? Whatever happened to the guy who sang "America" and "Sign O' The Times"? Where have you gone, Prince Rogers Nelson? A nation turns its lonely eyes to you.

Why don't you call up Paul Westerberg, another Minneapolis genius your age who is going through his own struggle with silence and relevance, a guy who I'd rather hear blow into two pop bottles on a boom box than most of the stuff that passes for "rock" these days, and do "Ebony and Ivory" for the double-oughts?

Where's your updating of "Money Don't Matter 2night"? for this cash-obsessed nation? Do you have another "Adore," the greatest love song the world doesn't know about, in you? Does another "Race" or "Uptown" percolate somewhere deep inside — something that seeks to unite the melting pot even as it feels like it's about to boil over?

You wrote "We Gets Up" for Michael Jordan and the Chicago Bulls. How about one for Malik Sealy, and our heartbroken, wounded Wolves, that captures that specific sense of dread and fan-grief that nobody's been able to express with words? How about a grand epic about this technology grog, and how it both fragments and bonds us? Or what about something small, something we can all relate to, about marriage trouble or the death of a loved one?

We are waiting, have been waiting, for your contribution. Instead, we get more funk, joy in repetition, and something called "Cybersingle." Which is fine. But heavens to Bootsy, we already know you're funky and computer-savvy and cutting-edge and all that. What we need are some songs that express what is in our hearts, minds, souls. Some greatness.

Maybe you're resting, or burned out, or in a forty-something funk, waiting for the songs to come. I can relate. Been there. But you're the one who said, "Dearly beloved, we are gathered here today to get through this thing called life," and I feel like I'm going to need machetes to get through the next 10 years, so it'd be nice if you had my back along the way.

And if you're afraid that your best work is behind you —

and who could blame you if you did, after all the great stuff you've given the world? — remember this: When they were in their early 40s, Elvis and John Coltrane were dead and Elton was coasting, but Bob Dylan made *Infidels*, Neil Young made *Freedom*, Marvin Gaye made *Here, My Dear*, Tom Waits made *Bone Machine*, Lou Reed made *New York*, John Lennon made *Double Fantasy*, Madonna made *Ray Of Light*, Van Morrison made *No Guru, No Method, No Teacher*, and Miles Davis made *Bitches Brew*.

So do me a favour. Don't ignore this. When you perform at Northrop Auditorium next Tuesday, don't do an oldies show, which I already fear you're working up. Show us that you're paying attention. Seize the moment.

Do you have anything left to say? If not get out of the way. Don't tease us, because it hurts too much. And don't pretend that you care, because if you cared the way Prince used to care, you'd go into your studio and pull an all-weekender, shake yourself up, throw out the formulas that got you (us) here, splash your canvas with all the desperation, ennui and hope of the age, and set the world on fire again.

May U live 2 see the dawn,

Jim

(reprinted by permission of Jim Walsh)

After reading the open letter, Prince had one of his assistants summon Jim Walsh to Paisley Park for a meeting. When Walsh arrived at Paisley Park, Prince and the band were rehearsing "When You Were Mine." Prince saw him and indicated that they were almost finished and that he would be with him shortly. Prince then took Walsh into his office and pulled up the article on his computer and started reading to him, pausing periodically to ask questions. Prince asked Walsh, "Do you consider yourself my brother?" Walsh replied, "Yes, I guess so." Prince then said, "Well, is that how you talk to your brother?" And Walsh replied, "Yeah, pretty much. I argue with my brothers all the time and we tell each other when we're not doing the right thing." Walsh characterised his meeting with Prince as a "very spirited two-hour chat about God, the music industry, creativity." It reminded him of "when my brothers and I play a good trash-talkin' game of one-on-one basketball." Walsh felt it was "cool that he [Prince] cared enough to want to have the discussion, rather than dismiss it out of hand." Prince ended up refusing press credentials to Walsh for the Northrop Auditorium concert, which Walsh said he was expecting (so he had already bought a ticket). He said that, in retrospect, he is glad that he wrote the article but there is a part of him that regrets it because he feels it is somewhat presumptuous making demands of an artist.



Blackshire sang backing vocals at the soundboard. They continued with an instrumental jam entitled "Golden Parachute" (according to NPGonlineLTD). Prince played bass and traded keyboard solos with Morris and Kirk supplied various loops and samples. Next, they played a part of "Come On," followed by a snippet of "The Ballad Of Dorothy Parker."

"This song is nasty," Prince said about the next song, "Poom Poom," much of which included Prince's recorded vocals, not live vocals. When the line "if you were here I wouldn't masturbate" came along, Prince said, "I ain't singing" in a coy manner. Around 20 people were onstage, dancing and shaking their bodies to "Poom Poom." Prince wanted to know their names and asked one guy, "Do you believe in God?". It seemed as if the guy couldn't hear what Prince said and replied, "What was that?". Prince responded, "Wrong answer!". Prince introduced his "choir" onstage to sing along to a new song, "Vavoom," described as "rock and roll dipped with 'Cream'" on NPGonlineLTD. The people onstage helped out during the simple chorus, "Vavoom, Vavoom, Vavoom!". "That's number one on our radio station at Paisley Park, forget about 96.3," Prince said at the end of the song.

Prince left the stage at 4:20 am and went to the soundboard. Kirk and Morris were still onstage. They started a sample of "Mad" and Prince began rapping from a large book of lyrics, including some from "Acknowledge Me." The party continued as former NPG member Damon Dickson handed Prince a video from the *Diamonds And Pearls* tour that was shown on a big screen. During a rap by Tony Mosley in the film, Prince slowly and purposely turned down the sound volume while laughing. Damon and Morris could be heard laughing loudly long after the bit ended. The party was over at 4:40 am.

#### July 15th (am)

Prince performed again at Paisley Park on Saturday morning, July 15th (am). The doors opened around midnight and the cover charge was \$7. There was only a small crowd at first, but after a few hours the Love 4 One Another room was completely packed.

It was almost 3:30 am before the DJ stopped playing and Prince began screening concert footage from the Northrop show ("The Greatest Romance Ever Sold"). Shortly afterwards, Larry Graham, Kirk Johnson, and Morris Hayes hopped onstage and started jamming on Graham Central Station's "Tell Me What It Is." Prince joined them after a few minutes, as did new dancer Geneva. They continued with an instrumental take on Larry's "Free" before Prince took charge, playing guitar on a rendition of "Rock Me, Baby," performed as a fast-paced rock number. Prince impressed the crowd with some awe-inspiring guitar playing.

"Vavoom" was next, featuring more first-rate guitar work by Prince. Then two male dancers came onstage to dance. They started doing their dance routines, at which point Prince asked for some ladies to come up onstage. In about 10 seconds, the entire stage was full of dancing women. A lengthy jam on "Y Should Eye Do That, When Eye Can Do This?" was followed by "American Woman," played to a loop of "Vivrant Thing." The stage was so crowded so Prince had to play guitar behind his keyboard. After the song, Prince asked the people onstage to take a break so former NPG member Rhonda Smith could get set up. Kirk started a loop for "The One" and Rhonda came onstage and started playing the song on her fretless bass. Prince sang most of the vocals but left out the falsetto parts. Rhonda took a bass solo before Prince sang the last verse and they wrapped it up. Most felt "The One" was one of the highlights of the concert.

They continued with a long jam based around "Fight The Power" and "Sex Machine," featuring solos by Rhonda and Larry. Next was "The Good Life," a jam that had Prince speaking about "affirming positivity" while the band charged

along underneath him. The song borrowed the beat from Q-Tip's "Breathe And Stop." Most fans felt it was a little too long and kind of boring after awhile. "Freaks On This Side" and "Mad" closed the two-hour set. Prince sang the latter from the behind the soundboard over a break provided by the DJ and bass by Larry and keyboards by Morris. It was over at 5:30 am.

#### July 22nd (am)

Prince performed at Paisley Park for the fourth consecutive week, on July 22nd (am). We do not have all the details, but NPGonlineLTD reported some details on the concert.

With Prince at the soundboard, Morris Hayes and Kirk Johnson started with "Days Of Wild." Prince ridiculed the radio stations in Minneapolis, citing 96.3FM and 101.3FM as perpetrators of an "unfunky way of life." The Blackshire brothers and DVS helped out on vocals on the 15-minute workout on "Days Of Wild." Prince played keyboards for "Come On," which went into "Fight The Power," before "Gett Off" and "Mad" closed the set.

#### July 29th (am)

For the fifth week in a row, Prince performed at Paisley Park, on July 29th (am). There was a fairly large crowd present.

Shortly after 3:00 am, Prince at the soundboard started playing the new "Hot Wit U" remix video (first shown during the May 20th am party). At 3:30 am, Prince, Morris Hayes and Kirk Johnson entered the stage. They started a loop that sounded like "Right Back Here In My Arms" and Prince launched into a lengthy guitar solo. Next, Prince sat down at the piano and played some beautiful music, accompanied by Kirk's light drum work. There were no vocals. After he re-grouped from the piano work, Prince had Kirk start a loop, which was slowed down more and more until it was almost at half the tempo it started at. Prince grabbed the one-eyed bass for a bass workout. He slapped the bass so hard that the speakers were vibrating. At one point, he played the bass and the keyboard at the same time.

Following the jam-oriented opening of the gig, Prince went into "Hot Wit U." He invited people onto the stage to dance. The crowd sang along to the next number, which was unidentified by the fans. The chorus went something like, "Let me have it all." Next, Kip Blackshire and rapper DVS appeared on the stage. Prince retreated to the soundboard as Kip and DVS did some of their own songs. Prince played a loop of "Come On," followed by "Mad Sex" at the soundboard. The concert was over at 4:45 am, but the party continued until 5:00 am.

#### August 5th (am)

Another Paisley Park party was held the next Saturday morning, August 5th (am). This time there was no performance by Prince. The doors opened at 1:45 am and there was a "suggested" donation of \$7. Around 300 people attended.

Prince showed up at the soundboard shortly before 2:30 am, cuing up the *Septimo* performance from Spanish TV in 1999. Very few people were dancing while the concert was on. After the 30-minute tape was over, the DJ tried to get things going but had quite a bit of difficulty, with records skipping. Then he just put in the *Newpower Soul* CD and played a few tracks in order, including "Until U're In My Arms Again," obviously not a danceable tune. The crowd started thinning out at 3:30 am but the party continued until 4:20 am.

#### August 12th (am)

There was a party at Paisley Park on Saturday morning, August 12th (am). The doors opened at 1:15 am (no cover charge). There were only 20 fans in attendance but the crowd increased to about 200 people eventually. Dancer Geneva was at the party, dancing on the floor amongst the

crowd. Around at 4:30 am, when many people had left the party, a video shoot started in the Love 4 One Another room. One of the staff members had a video camera and shot footage of Geneva dancing. There were about 15 people in the room. Prince was at a catwalk and directed the video shoot. He had a flashlight on his hand and pointed to whoever he wanted to be in the video. After the video shoot, Prince came down to the dance floor, took Geneva's hand and went into the studios. The party was over right after Prince left, at 4:50 am.

#### Sightings

According to a fan, Prince attended the Fluid nightclub in Toronto, Wednesday, May 17th. He had his own private section in the club, although patrons could see him.

Prince showed up at The Front in Minneapolis on Wednesday, May 24th. A Cadillac pulled up in front of the club at about 11:00 pm and two of Prince's bodyguards (Aaron and someone else) got out to inspect the club. They cleared off a table in the back for Prince. About half an hour later, a white limousine pulled up. The Front's DJ, Wolf, saw that Prince was getting out and immediately put on "Prettyman." Prince entered The Front with a lady friend and proceeded to the table that had been prepared for him. DJ Wolf played a remix of "Come On" and "My Name Is Prince," but Prince left after only 15 to 20 minutes.

Prince and Q-Tip attended a party at Chelsea Piers in New York on Friday, June 23rd. Q-Tip was with former MTV VJ Idalis, while Prince brought dancers Desray and Geneva with him. They danced for about three hours. Prince spoke to a couple of fans and shook some hands, but mostly kept to himself. The next night, Saturday, June 24th, Prince, Stevie Wonder, and Q-Tip huddled at Float in New York. The management let them have the VIP room to themselves for 90 minutes. NPGonlineLTD also reported that Prince hung out with Mary J. Blige while in New York.

Prince was spotted at The Lounge in Minneapolis. He arrived in the company of his bodyguard Aaron shortly after midnight on Sunday, July 16th am.

Prince attended the Los Angeles premiere of Eddie Murphy's new film, *Nutty Professor II: The Klumps*. The screening and party were held at Universal Studios on Monday, July 24th.

#### Guest appearance

Prince guested on stage with Maceo Parker at his concert at the Beacon Theater, New York, in late June. Maceo performed as Bruce Hornsby's opening act. Prince brought out Maceo's saxophone and teased the audience by almost coming out a few times. In the end, he played an extended organ solo.

#### Rave Un2 The Year 2000 video/DVD

The release dates of the *Rave Un2 The Year 2000* video/DVD are the following: Europe (including the UK): June 5th, Japan: July 1st, and USA: October 31st.

#### Bamboozled soundtrack

Prince will appear on the soundtrack album to Spike Lee's new film, *Bamboozled*. It will also feature tracks from Angie Stone, Stevie Wonder, Rage Against The Machine, and Erykah Badu, amongst others.

#### Divorce

Prince and Mayte have "officially" divorced. The couple signed off on divorce papers in mid-May. In the settlement, Mayte got the house in Spain and \$250,000 per year. The house is now on the market since Mayte has moved to New York.



"I WILL NOW GO BACK TO USING MY NAME INSTEAD OF THE SYMBOL I adopted as a means to free myself from all undesirable relationships," Prince said at the New York press conference on May 16th 2000 when he announced that he has reclaimed his given name, Prince Rogers Nelson. He explained that he is reverting to his name because his Warner Chappell Music publishing deal expired on December 31st 1999. The deal was the last of the contracts to which he was bound under the name of Prince. "I was really angry when I used the symbol," Prince said. He said the name change in 1993 was to distance himself from Warner Bros., which he claimed was trying to prevent him from controlling his own career.

## From Prince to ♫

When Prince changed his name to an unpronounceable symbol on his 35th birthday, June 7th 1993, he explained that it was for spiritual reasons; he was merely acting on the "advice of his spirit." He said, "You have to trust God. God's answer was 'change your name.'" However, he also made it clear that his intention was to fulfil his Warner Bros. contract with "Prince" recordings from the vault while continuing to record and release new material as "♫." The name change to ♫ can also be seen as an earnest desire to rid himself of the past and reinvent himself. "When you're trying to change, you have to divorce yourself from the past," Prince has said. It is evident that he felt very strongly about Warner Bros. "owning" his name; he felt that "Prince" had too many "bad connotations."

Initially, the name change resulted in a great deal of speculation. The motivation behind the decision and the actual pronunciation of the symbol quickly became the most talked-about subjects in the pop music world. A common theory, particularly amongst fans, was that his new name was Victor, an argument based on the self-referential lyrics of "The Sacrifice Of Victor" on ♫. Prince finished that song in a mysterious fashion, stating that, "When I reach my destination that's when I'll know, that's when my name will be Victor." The theory that his new name was Victor was also supported by claims that the symbol could be deconstructed to have separate parts spell "Victor." Fully aware of the speculations, Prince/♫ would later deny that his name was Victor, or any other name anyone might have suggested, emphasising that there was no oral pronunciation for the symbol.

It is clear that Prince took the name change very seriously. He insisted that he didn't want to be called "Prince" any longer and Paisley Park employees who so addressed him were fined. It became an issue of loyalty for him; the people who called him "Prince" were those who questioned him (most band members and employees settled for "the boss"). He said in interviews that he no longer felt a kinship with songs he had written as "Prince" and announced in concerts that "Prince is dead." He referred to Prince in the third person and spoke about how he had changed since becoming ♫, explaining that Prince "held a massive ego" and that "the rock star thing" associated with Prince was over.

Prince/♫ commonly became known as The Artist Formerly Known as Prince or simply The Artist. His name was lampooned by many; he was often given such media tags as "Glyph," "TAFKAP," "Symbol" or "Symbol Man." It is fair to say that Prince's name change produced as much or more ridicule than any pop culture development of the past decade. When his camp made it clear that he could be referred to orally as "the Artist," many observers criticised this appellation as another example of Prince/♫'s arrogance (ironically, Prince/♫ claimed in interviews that "the Artist" was a term invented by the media, not by him/his organisation).

With almost every album release, the name question was one of the main topics of media interest, which distracted attention from the music. Further complicating matters was that "Prince" albums like *Come*, the *Black Album*, *Girl 6*, and *The Vault... Old Friends 4 Sale* were released long after the name change, often in direct competition with "♫" releases. Right up until 1999's *Rave Un2 The Joy Fantastic*, Prince/♫ simply could not get away from media's discussion about the symbol name. His self-comparisons with Cassius Clay/Mohammed Ali and Malcolm Little/Malcolm X invited further attention and scrutiny. Seemingly, the media and general public could not accept that an unpronounceable symbol could be someone's name. The name dilemma only served to reinforce the public image of Prince as an eccentric and reclusive artist out of touch with reality.

## Inconsistent

Prince/♫'s rationale for the seemingly momentous decision of changing his name was never entirely coherent or consistent. In the first year or so following the announcement, there appeared to a certain logic to the change – Prince/♫ wished to end public fascination with the "Prince persona," a sex-crazed, ego-tripping pop star. He explained the name change in interviews by saying that he was "a little ashamed of what Prince had become." He said that he felt "like a product" during his final years with Warner Bros., "I started turning in work that reflected that."

To many hardcore fans, this sort of soul-searching was welcome, especially

# My Name Is

Having been known as ♫ for nearly seven years,

Prince announced on May 16th 2000 that he is

reverting back to his given name.

since it followed a period when Prince/♫'s music was becoming increasingly unadventurous and predictable. The name change, which also dovetailed with the development of Prince/♫'s relationship with Mayte Garcia, seemed to indicate that this artist was really changing – he was trading sexual adventure for monogamy, and callow hit-making for true artistry.

The initial years of the ♫ period seemed quite promising from the perspective of serious fans. *The Gold Experience* and *Emancipation* were welcomed by followers and critics as serious, mature works. *Emancipation*, in particular, showed an artist making an effective transition into middle age. The record celebrated, in copious detail, ♫'s marriage to Mayte, and the music – while perhaps not as bold or innovative as some earlier "Prince" music – was of very high quality.

Unfortunately, Prince/♫'s actions and words did not remain consistent with his initial interpretation of the name change as an indication of spiritual independence and maturity. He began writing "slave" on his face and spoke of "Prince Rogers Nelson" as a name given to him by those who, in the past, had enslaved blacks. This new approach to the name change inspired some black activists, but to some observers appeared to clash with the earlier, exclusively spiritual explanations for the new name.

The notion that "Prince is dead" gradually gave way to oblique public explanations that "Prince" was an "earlier version" of himself; he had achieved his higher self as ♫. And rather than moving away from his old material, he began to re-emphasise it in concert. The tours in support of *Emancipation*, which serious fans had hoped would be a showcase for this excellent album of new material, became more akin to a Vegas-style revue of Prince's greatest hits. In fact, it seemed as if he played more Prince songs for every passing year that he held the "♫" identity.

## Prince as producer

Ever since Prince adopted the symbol as his name, fans have speculated that he would one day revert to being known as Prince. Many believed that his break from Warner Bros. in 1996 would herald the return of Prince, but he continued releasing records as ♫ after leaving the label. *Emancipation*, *Crystal Ball*, *The Truth*, and *Rave Un2 The Joy Fantastic* were all attributed to ♫. Although he played increasingly more Prince material in his live shows, there was nothing he said in interviews to suggest that he was thinking about reclaiming his name. As late as last year, he said that people were insulting him if they didn't use the symbol to represent his name.

Prince/♫ surprised fans and critics alike when he "enlisted" Prince as producer on *Rave Un2 The Joy Fantastic*. He explained the move by saying that Prince was "a good editor, a good decision maker" and that Prince "knows a hit." Despite his explanations, it was obvious that having Prince listed on the back cover sleeve, in bold letters, was first and foremost intended to boost sales. After all, "Prince" is a household name, associated with tremendous success and countless classic songs (it is something of a paradox that "Prince" is a much stronger popular trademark than the symbol, which is a copyrighted trademark).

In retrospect, the decision to credit Prince as producer was peculiar, for several reasons. It was almost as if saying that ♫ was no longer capable of making hits and, unlike Prince, ♫ was *not* a good editor and *not* a good decision maker. Furthermore, the Prince credit attracted a great deal of unwanted media attention, leading to an even stronger emphasis on the name issue. ♫/Prince even had to respond to questions in interviews about whether he had a dual identity disorder. "I'm not



# Prince

This article discusses the motivation behind the name changes, from Prince to ♪ in 1993 and back to Prince in 2000.

schizophrenic, don't believe in schizophrenia," he reassured. "It's all you; it's just which part of yourself you show." Ultimately, the Prince production credit – on an album attributed to ♪ – only caused confusion and led to more discussion about his name(s).

*Rave Un2 The Joy Fantastic* turned out to be the last gasp for the ♪ name. Although the record was praised by many fans and critics, it failed to have anything near the commercial impact that ♪/Prince had hoped for. This disappointing showing was likely a factor in convincing ♪/Prince to dropping the symbol once and for all.

## The return of Prince

A few events in the spring of 2000 seemed to indicate that Prince/♪ was reconsidering his hardcore stance regarding the ♪ name. First, in response to a question on NPGonlineLTD on March 28th, he said, "A few of my associates have suggested that I am merely coasting until the day that I am completely free... (there is a small issue with the name: Prince still being on a Time Warner publishing contract.) Once this is cleared up, the guitar will truly sing again." Many took his answer to mean that he could become "Prince" again once he was "completely free."

Next, the "Prince: A Celebration" event was announced on May 6th, promising a concert by "Prince" as the grand finale. Obviously, this fuelled speculation that he was changing his name to Prince, or at least was going to make an appearance as "Prince." On May 9th, his spokesperson, Lois Najarian, told *Sonicker* that "he's feeling very 'Princely' these days." She said that he still used the Prince name when referring to himself in a historical sense. A week later, the New York press conference was staged and Prince made the announcement.

Expectedly, the decision to revert to Prince yielded many new jokes from the media. It became popular to refer to him as "the Artist Formerly Known as the Artist Formerly Known as Prince." Still, the media stood up and paid a great deal of attention and the name change was the top entertainment news story in virtually every newswire service in the US.

## Reasons

Sadly, Prince/♪'s eventual return to the "Prince" name essentially made mince-meat of all of his previous rationalisations. By describing the initial name change as, essentially, a subterfuge to undermine Warner Bros., Prince revealed his long and fruitless use of the symbol as a campaign driven by economics and anger, not spirituality or political consciousness. If Prince had initially changed his name as a result of some spiritual imperative, it is unlikely he would have ever abandoned the ♪ name – especially just after the final expiration of his Warners' contract.

If we accept Prince/♪'s stated motivation for the reversion to "Prince" as genuine, it remains open to debate why he didn't make the announcement when (or around the time when) his contract actually had expired, January 1st 2000. After all, that is when he was free from all Warner Bros. contracts – why wait five months with the announcement? It is also odd that he said in response to the question on NPGonlineLTD, March 28th 2000, that Prince *still* was on a Time Warner contract. Certainly, he knew at that time that "Prince" was not so contracted.

These inconsistencies indicate that there were reasons for the name change that Prince chose not to reveal. There is no question that Prince/♪ was becoming very frustrated by the media's focus on and lack of respect for his symbol name. He didn't understand why people wouldn't accept the symbol as his name and why it

continued to create such problems long after he changed his name. "He had a problem with my name," Prince/♪ complained in 1999 after being interviewed by MTV's Kurt Loder. "I asked him what the problem was. He just said there is a problem. The truth is that there is no problem. I made it known very publicly that that was my new name."

Most likely, Prince eventually reached the conclusion that the name change back to Prince was necessary for him to be taken seriously as an artist again. Playing a part in his decision was the lack of spectacular success as the symbol; the only notable hit he had achieved as "♪" was "The Most Beautiful Girl In The World" in 1994. Never one to admit to creative or commercial failures, Prince chose instead to refer to the expiration of his last contract with Warner Bros. as the primary reason why he suddenly discarded the symbol as his name.

## Shifting the focus

In the final analysis, the name change from Prince to ♪, and back again, can be seen as a substantial part of both his popular decline and his alienation of hardcore fans. The initial name change to ♪ made him a laughingstock and created widespread confusion about his music and persona. Prince may now understand that his massive loss of support among casual fans occurred partly because of the name-change controversy and the confusion caused by the nearly simultaneous release of "Prince" and "♪" records. Whether the change back to Prince will reverse this trend remains to be seen, but at this point there is much damage to undo.

Clearly, Prince realised at some point during recent years that "Prince" was a strong brand name that he seriously eroded by criticising and distancing himself from "Prince." Last year, he denounced the Prince release *The Vault... Old Friends 4 Sale* and said, "If The Symbol ain't on it...neither is The Sound of Freedom!". *The Vault... Old Friends 4 Sale* was an obvious contract-filler, much like 1994's *Come*, which also was attributed to Prince. However, if the strategy was to release his most lacklustre albums as "Prince" records, one has to wonder as to the logic of releasing 1996's *Chaos And Disorder*, one of his least inspired records ever, as a ♪ album.

Many of Prince's more serious fans were alienated to a degree by the initial name change. His popularity in Europe reached its zenith in the first years of the '90s; a few years later, as ♪, he had trouble selling out the venues where he previously had played multiple dates. His constantly shifting statements regarding the name led to a loss of confidence among those who followed Prince's every word. Moreover, Prince troubled many fans through his zealous legal protection of the symbol, which included lawsuits against various Internet sites and against UPTOWN based on our publication of the symbol as his name.

The reasons behind this latest change – like the reasons behind many of Prince's actions – are opaque and mysterious. However, regardless of *why* he decided to become Prince again, most fans wholeheartedly welcome the return of Prince. Hopefully, it means that the focus from now on will be on Prince's work – not his name.

## New inspiration

Prince recently said that he has nothing to prove musically, which in many ways is true. After more than 20 years of almost non-stop recording, maybe he realises that his real challenge of the future does not lie in trying to break new musical ground, but in developing as a human being, by undertaking a journey of personal and spiritual growth. Prince had initially planned to take 1999 off to do "nothing but reflect," but a chance meeting with Arista boss Clive Davis and the lure of big money and chart success led him to reconsider his plan. Still, Prince's comments during the May 16th press conference, about going on a spiritual retreat, indicate an earnest desire to take a break from the music, allowing him to get a new perspective on his music, career, and life in general.

On the other hand, experience tells us that Prince's words seldom match his actions. Indeed, despite the name changes and all the other changes, ranging from his clothes, hair, and colour schemes to his musicians and people around him, Prince appears to be remarkably conservative, clinging to the safe, pampered world he has created for himself. Hopefully, he is willing and able to learn more about the world and experience life outside of the secluded recording studios, stages, and clubs where he has spent most of his time since his late teens. Undoubtedly, travelling, experiencing other cultures, and meeting new people would help Prince recharge his creative batteries and revitalise his work.

"I was in warrior mode, but I don't feel like right-hooking anybody anymore," Prince said at the May 16th press conference, referring to the time he was feuding with Warner Bros., the conflict-ridden "♪ years." One can only hope that Prince can find new inspiration and will be able to finally leave behind the anger and bitterness of the conflict years. In fact, his future as an artist may depend upon it.

By The UPTOWN staff.



# ***Days Of Wild And Beautiful Nights***

Prince opened the doors of Paisley Park from June 7th through 12th 2000 for "7 Days Of Wild and 7 Beautiful Nights," in the words of NPGonlineLTD. Fans from all over the world attended the activities, which included nightly parties and daily tours of Paisley Park. Fans could visit the "Paisley Museum," housing Prince's most famous outfits, cars, and some of his instruments. Several guests, including Taja Sevelle, Macy Gray, and Kirk Johnson's new band Fonky Baldheads, performed

at Paisley Park during the week. The highlight of the event was a unique Prince performance at the Northrop Auditorium, June 13th, which saw him reuniting with three former Revolution members on a take on "America." We asked some of our friends who attended the "Prince Celebration" to share their impressions and recollections from the event. Our feature is comprised of no less than seven reports.



On June 12th, the "Purple Rain" theme night, it rained. Then, as the sun seemed to magically push the clouds away, a beautiful rainbow appeared in the purple hued sky. At the rainbow's end, "a Paisley pot of gold." Strange but true!



## A Day-By-Day Recap

By Frédéric Heller

Tuesday, 6 June

Fans reported that Prince and The NPG were rehearsing "America" at Paisley Park for an hour or more in the evening.

Wednesday, 7 June

First party night. All parties took mainly place in the smaller Love 4 One Another room. A new "Purple Medley II" was presented, which acted as a video trailer for the celebration; it consists of the same music from the original "Purple Medley," but the song snippets are put in a new sequence, some bits have been left off, some new bits from *Rave Un2 The Joy Fantastic* have been added. Worse than the original and uninspired.

Several videos were shown (without sound, shown to the DJ music!): *Saturday Night Live* 1981 ("Partyup"), 15 minutes from the planned concert movie from 1982 (rough cut), "America" filmed in Nice 1985 (an extended version where Prince sits at the drums at the end and puts a tambourine around his neck), Nice/MTV 1985 interview bits (including outtake footage, with Jerome, French girl/concierge in movie, joking around). A five-minute instrumental version of "Mad" was aired.

Macy Gray's performance lasted from 1:40 to 2:30 am (a soundcheck began at 1:30 am). Prince guested on stage for about a minute. He thought the band was going into a Sly and The Family Stone number, but it was just an intro to one of Macy's songs. Prince wanted to play keyboards and jam on the Sly number, but he was disappointed when it was cut short and left the stage. The performance was disappointing. The band wasn't very skilled. Dr. Fink and some other associates were in attendance.

Thursday, 8 June

Second party night, with Larry Graham and Desray amongst others in attendance. Taja Sevelle played from 11:50 pm to 12:45 am. Her set included "Love Is Contagious," "Come With Me" (instrumental), "Good Times." It was nice, but too many ballads and not funky enough. Prince watched from his "tower seat," a small niche on an elevation, right next to the stage.

Friday, 9 June

Three bands performed. Kirk Johnson's previous band, TKO, started, playing from 11:20 to 11:45 pm. Then came BKS (as in Best Kept Secret), which were three female vocalists with TKO as backing band. They played from 11:45 to 12:45 pm. Kirk's new band, Fonky Baldheads, closed the show, playing from 12:45 to 1:10 pm. Their set included "Head." Prince was at the soundboard mixing.

Videos shown at the Paisley Park soundstage included the end of a Prince performance with Mavis Staples ("The Undertaker"), "Days Of Wild" (instrumental, heavy guitar work, cool) and "The Ride" with Larry Graham from late 1999 or 2000, and the performances on TFI (*Tout Lara Fabian*) and Canal+ (*Nulle Part Ailleurs*) from 1999.

Saturday, 10 June

Performance by Days Of Wild, cover band, from 11:30 to 1:55 pm (almost two and a half hours). Their concert was fun, but way too long for a cover band (what are they doing here anyway, when the original is in the house?).

Videos shown included *Act II* tour footage from Sheffield Arena, August 2nd 1993: the complete closing jam (one of the best of the entire tour), 15-minute medley of "1999," "Baby, I'm A Star," and "America" (with snippets of "Take The A-Train," "Nasty Girl," and "It's Gonna Be A Beautiful Night."). Prince was at the soundboard after the Days Of Wild performance and played the videos (also the new "Hot Wit U" clip). At 3:55 pm, Prince appeared on stage with a soft drink and a flower to shake hand with fans in the front rows. Many were still expecting a performance by him (which never materialised at the Park).

Sunday, 11 June

Prince went to a Minneapolis church with Larry Graham and a French journalist, Alain Orlandini (*Rock & Folk*) at 8:00 am. Prince was alone, without any bodyguards. The three of them sat together to attend the mass. Then Prince suddenly left. Orlandini was invited to Larry's house for a pizza before they conducted an interview.

Performance by Mint Condition, from 12:40 to 2:15 pm. They were technically skilled, tight, and funky. Videos included more footage from Sheffield '93 (same gig): "The Beautiful Ones," "Let's Go Crazy," and "Kiss." Prince was again at soundboard, playing videos himself. He was visited by and had chats with Taja

Sevelle, Matt Fink, and Desray. Later, Prince went up to the DJ booth and played the following new tracks: "Kiss" (the extended portion of a new extended version – cool), "Hit U In The Socket" (Rosie Gaines), "Splash," "Peace," "Y Should Eye Do That When Eye Can Do This?," "Cybersingle," and "Man 'O' War" (remix).

Monday, 12 June

Rehearsals began at the Cyrus Northrop Memorial Auditorium, University Of Minnesota, Minneapolis. A draft set list for the concert was used during the rehearsal. The set list was the following: "Anna Stesia" – "The Greatest Romance Ever Sold" / "Uptown" / "Let's Work" / "Delirious" / "Purple Rain" / "Prettyman" / Q-Tip (two songs) / "Come On" / "The One" (instrumental) / "The Question Of U" / "When You Were Mine" / "Just My Imagination" / "Days Of Wild" / Angie Stone: "No More Rain" / Mavis Staples: "I'll Take You There" and "When Will We Be Paid" / Rosie Gaines: "Dr. Feelgood," "Ain't No Way," and "Nothing Compares 2 U" medley / "Man 'O' War" / "Adore" / "America" – "D.M.S.R." – "It's Gonna Be A Beautiful Night" – "It's Alright" – "Talkin' Loud And Sayin' Nothing" – "Back" / "Kiss" / "Gett Off" / "Whatever U Do, Wherever U Go."

An earlier draft of the set list also included the following tracks: "Hot Wit U," "Mad Sex" (as one of the encores), and "Talkin' Loud And Sayin' Nothing" (as the final encore/last track). Possibly, some songs ("Hot Wit U," "Mad Sex," "D.M.S.R.") were left out to make the concert more "Larry friendly." It's unclear what song "Back" is. Possibly "back" to "America" or "hit me in the back" (a cue for "It's Gonna Be A Beautiful Night" ending). Clearly Mavis and Rosie were scheduled to attend the concert. There was also a comment on NPGonlineLTD about Rosie arriving at the celebration on Sunday. Unfortunately, they didn't show up. Angie Stone did "Dr. Feelgood" instead and Larry Graham was granted two songs to fill the space.

The rehearsal began at 4:45 pm, with Prince at the soundboard, Kirk Johnson on drums, and Larry Graham on bass. They rehearsed the following: 4:45: "The Greatest Romance Ever Sold" instrumental / 5:13: "The Greatest Romance Ever Sold" with Prince's vocal check / 5:20: Morris Hayes joins them on keyboards and plays a snippets from "Adore" and "The Greatest Romance Ever Sold" / 5:25: Hornheadz try-outs / 5:30: Hornheadz work on "America" / 5:40: Larry plays a bit of "Let's Work," followed by the whole band playing an instrumental take on "Let's Work" / 5:55: Prince enters the stage / 6:00: Prince plays a jazzy keyboard improvisation as a warm-up / 6:05: Prince warms up on guitar, playing a bit of "Playtime," followed by excerpts from "When You Were Mine" and "Sometimes It Snows In April" / 6:10: "Playtime" instrumental / 6:12: "No More Rain (In This Cloud)" instrumental / 6:13: "The Greatest Romance Ever Sold" instrumental with bluesy guitar improvisation / 6:25: "Adore" / 6:55: long jam on "America." The session continued with a rehearsal with Angie Stone. The listing is incomplete towards the end; the rehearsal probably lasted until late in the evening.

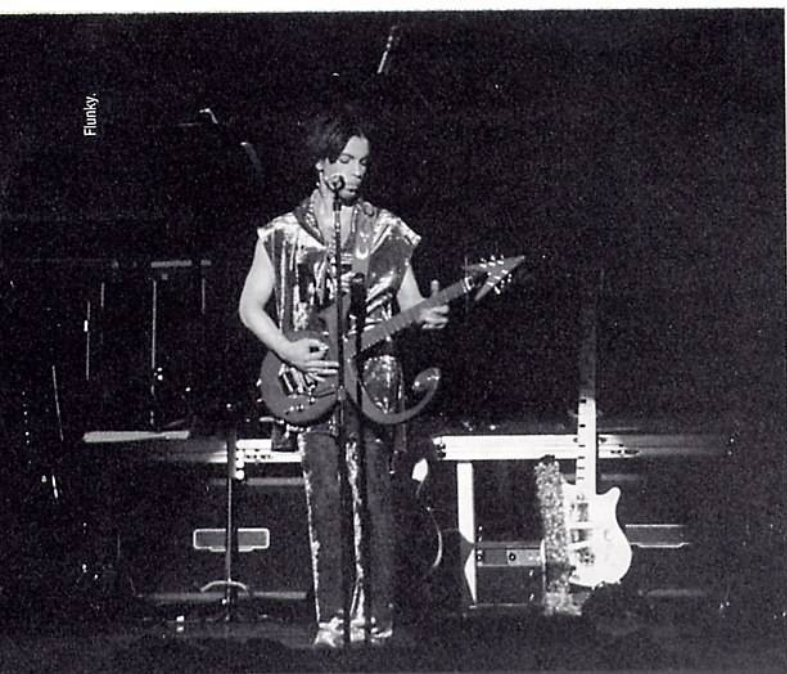
There was no performance at Paisley Park on Monday. It was an uninteresting evening. Mattie Nelson, Prince's mother, was in attendance. He spoke to her quite a while. Again a few snippets from the Sheffield '93 gig were shown. Apparently, the complete performance was shown in the afternoon. On earlier afternoons some of the other videos were apparently shown with sound, including the 1982 live concert footage (although just the beginning of the show).

The Combo (ex- Dr. Mambo's Combo) played their regular set on Monday night at Bunker's. Michael Bland was on the drums, Sonny Thompson on bass, Margie Cox on vocals, and guest Jellybean Johnson on guitar among others. It was an excellent set. The best show of the week so far! Too bad it had nothing to do with the Prince Celebration.

Tuesday, 13 June

The rehearsal/soundcheck at Northrop started at 5:50 pm and lasted two hours. The following songs and jams were played: 5:50: The band members warm up on their own, without Prince / 6:00: Beginning of session with Prince / 6:03: Fast jazz jam / 6:05: Slow jazz jam / 6:10: "Days Of Wild" instrumental jam with saxophone / 6:21: "The One" instrumental intro / 6:25: "The Question Of U" instrumental / 6:29: "When You Were Mine" / 6:33: Short guitar solo by Prince / 6:35: Work on Kip Blackshire's backing vocals on "Nothing Compares 2 U" / 6:49: "Take Me With U" instrumental / 6:50: "Breathe And Stop" with Q-Tip and Doug E. Fresh / 6:59: "Vivrant Thing" jam, with Prince on Purpleleaxe, with Q-Tip and Doug E. Fresh / 7:04: "La-Di-Da-Di" with Q-Tip and Doug E. Fresh / 7:07: 15-minute pause / 7:22: Work on the beginning of "Anna Stesia" (several times) / 7:34: Prince discusses the set list with sound technicians. At one point he said, "...and then the next song a real long reverb, if we do it – [Just My] Imagination – if we do that, I'm kinda drowned you know." / 7:40: Horn work on "America" and "It's Gonna Be A Beautiful Night" / 7:50: End of rehearsal.





Prince at the Northrop show.



### The concert

The concert was held at the Cyrus Northrop Memorial Auditorium, University Of Minnesota, Minneapolis (seating capacity of 5,000). The show started at 9:15 pm and lasted exactly 200 minutes without a seven-minute break.

The set list was the following (note that some of the tracks are just snippets): Instrumental intro / "Anna Stesia" / "The Greatest Romance Ever Sold" – "4 The Tears In Your Eyes" / "Uptown" / "Let's Work" / "Delirious" – "Rock And Roll Is Alive! (And It Lives In Minneapolis)" (instrumental outro) / "Purple Rain" / "Prettyman" / Intermission (Hornheadz's track) / "Give It Up Or Turn It A Loose (instrumental)" / "Breathe And Stop" – "Hola, Hola, Hola" (chant) / Vivrant Thing – "Hola, Hola, Hola" (chant) / Simon Says – La-Di-Da-Di / Come On / The One (instrumental interlude) / The Question Of U (instrumental) / When You Were Mine / Days Of Wild / No More Rain (In This Cloud) / Dr. Feelgood / Nothing Compares 2 U / Take Me With U / Raspberry Beret / The Beverly Hillbillies Theme (country & western song, instrumental) – The James Bond Theme – (Eye Like) Funky Music – Funky 4 No Reason (chant) / The Jam – A Night In Tunisia / Everyday People / seven-minute pause / Man 'O' War / Adore / America – Give It Up Or Turn It A Loose (instrumental) – Take The A Train – Funky 4 No Reason (chant) – It's Gonna Be A Beautiful Night (instrumental) / Kiss / Gett Off (instrumental) – Gett Off (Houstyle) (instrumental) – Doing It To Death (instrumental) – Groove On (instrumental) – Push It Up.

Prince said during "The Greatest Romance Ever Sold," talking about the curfew, "Londell can you hear me? We gonna take our time tonight". Prince mixed up some of the lyrics of "Anna Stesia" and "Uptown." For "Days Of Wild," he wanted his lyric book. He got it from the keyboard, but lost it while jumping to the front: the folder fell, opened, and the sheets flew in all directions. He managed to do the song without the lyric sheet in the end.

When Prince introduced Angie Stone she didn't show up. He had to start telling a story until she arrived. When she did, he introduced her "wrongly," "We'd like to bring to the stone... we'd like to bring to the stage, miss Angie Stone." Later

in the show, he called Larry, "Is Larry through on the bathroom?" (at the end of "America"). He asked, "Where is Q-Tip? I need my ears cleaned!" during "Groove On."

Prince inserted at bit of Pharoa Monch's underground hip-hop classic "Simon Says," played on his Purple Axxe keyboard, during Q-Tip and Doug E. Fresh's session.

### Preferred next album

On the iMac stations, fans were able to comment on the Celebration event and vote for their preferred next album. They could pick *one* of the following albums:

1. *Crystal Ball Vol. II*: you could pick from 22 song titles.
2. *Roadhouse Garden*: including "Splash," "Wonderful Ass," "Roadhouse Garden," "All My Dreams."
3. Live Album: you could enter your preferred period.
4. Rock Guitar Record
5. *Madrid 2 Chicago*: described as a "smooth jazz album."
6. *When 2 R In Love*: a collection of ballads, including "Do Me, Baby," "Insatiable," "Scandalous," "Adore."
7. A collection of covers by Prince: including "A Case Of You," "Just My Imagination," and other "funk classix."
8. New Studio Album: preferred flavour/style could be entered.

Early on in the week, it was evident that the winner was going to be the "Rock Guitar Record."

### Final thoughts

The studio tour was really great and interesting and lasted 30 minutes for VIP pass holders. But why was the tour shortened to 20 minutes for the daily pass buyers (15\$)? The parties took place in the smaller Love 4 One Another room which couldn't hold all guests; apparently because the acoustics were better there. Fans who arrived later or went to the bathroom weren't allowed to re-enter the L4OA room and had to wait in the huge Soundstage. Also, no re-entry upon leaving the building! Stupid organisation!

There was no performance by Prince at Paisley Park although many fans expected this. Of course, there was never a promise but he played there several times in the weeks prior to and after the event. There was also a hint on NPGonlineLTD, "You never know who might hit the stage." Prince plays for the "locals" every Friday but not for 2,000 fans from all over the world? Disappointing. The performances at the Park weren't too overwhelming. The best gig was at Bunker's!

The price, 70\$ for six parties and including the Northrop ticket, was very good. The DJ music at the Park was way too loud and included too much non-Prince stuff. They could have shown never-before-seen footage of old concerts or aftershows (imagine Den Haag 88!), but they showed Dortmund 88, *Purple Rain* and *Batman* snippets instead. What a pity! They missed the perfect opportunity to show some "treasures."

The organisation was often poor. I heard that Prince's assistant, who was in charge of the event, quit two weeks before the event. Also, due to the weeklong festivities, they had to fulfil stricter regulations (the ones for nightclubs) and clearly Paisley Park wasn't prepared for that. The officially published opening times were often changed; the last day, due to too many visitors, they closed the admission to the Park earlier than expected (at 2:30 pm instead of 3:00 pm) and so several fans couldn't make their "VIP Pass" tour (about two dozen people, maybe more). Is this how you treat VIPs?

The Northrop concert was very nice. My personal highlights: "Anna Stesia," "Uptown," "Days Of Wild," "Adore," and most of "America" with the three ex-Revolution members. Again, far too much Larry Graham, too much rapper stuff (one spot would have been fine), and too many songs that have already been played in identical arrangements since 1996 or earlier. The post-concert party: you have 2,000 fans from all over the world in town and you invite *other* people to the aftershow party? Hmm... Anyway, some VIP pass holders who waited long enough (after all blue cloth invites had entered) were also granted admission later on. So was the trip worth it? Hard to say, probably 50/50 – in other words, *not* a clear yes.

### How I Became Prince's Personal Toy

By Kathy Jentz

My overall impression: great time, exhausting, worth it! We provided a week's amusement to a lonely man in Minnesota and I'd pay for the chance to do it again.

### Nightly parties

All of the dance parties each evening at Paisley went pretty much the same.



We'd arrive close to 11 pm. The first two nights, before most of the big crowds arrived, it was heaven and all doors were open to everywhere. But from Friday on we were stuck in the Soundstage area cut off from our friends in the Love 4 One Another room (who were in line by 8 pm for doors to open at 9:15). We'd then hang out by the barrier, lean on a wall, and enjoy the coolness of a fan on our backs, while we watched one of the wall/video screens for an hour or so.

While lined up by the barrier on the next four nights, we got lucky three of the nights by getting "visits" by Prince as he went in and out of the side door by us, walked up to and through our crowd, and mainly just made his presence known to all in the Soundstage room. I thought this was nice of him in that he never even had to access that room — there were always side exits and ways that he could enter/leave unseen by all.

At the barrier we'd chat with whatever security was assigned "barrier duty" that night and eventually — usually between midnight and 1 am — we'd be allowed into the Love 4 One Another room. We'd greet friends, head straight for the NPG water station, and camp out near or on the elevated couch platform and its large fan. The bands were usually in full swing at this point and we just settled in for the shows.

#### Prince appears

By 2:30 am or when the bands finished each night, Prince arrived for his DJ/video antics. At this point the door between the two rooms was opened up completely and the crowds had thinned considerably. Their loss... because Prince always had a few treats in store. His *modus operandi* was to bring in a few videos from his office, fool around behind the soundboard queuing them up, and then pay them to gauge crowd reaction.

Prince started off slow the first few nights with the "Hot Wit U" video and some *Lovesexy* concert footage. He'd stay about 20 minutes or so, then have Aaron [his bodyguard] clear a path through the crowd for him and back up to his office, come down about 15 minutes later with new videos to view, and go on with this process about four times per night. The show he seemed to really enjoy showing off was an *Act II* from Sheffield. He also personally played some rare/unreleased songs.

About once a night Prince would climb over the soundboard and rail to sit on the metal staircase leading to the DJ balcony. Aaron would follow and clear the "riff-raff" off the DJ stairs at that point. Sometimes he'd go up to the DJ level and spin some tunes or just hang up there to watch people dance and chat up either DJ Dustin or Brother Jules or both.

The first night Prince appeared very uptight and nervous, just standing at the soundboard and not talking to anyone. The next night he'd loosened up a little, talked to a few people. And I could see (from my vantage point dancing on the couch platform each night) that he'd go behind the soundboard into the storage room and dance by himself in the dark for a few moments, then come back out all straight-faced and proper. That truly depressed me when I saw that — why did he feel he had to hide his joy from us?

The next night it was a different story — not only did he openly dance by the soundboard, but he also brought along some drum sticks to "air drum" with and was extremely talkative. From that night on he smiled/grinned, did his "nerdy" little Beck dance, and just grooved back there. It was a site to see folks! I'm still not over it and how vulnerable he looked. I tried not to look over too much and our crowd gave the man his space to party.

The last few nights of parties the crowds really pressed against the soundboard area and spent a lot of time staring the man down. He did his best to ignore it and enjoy the music — one of the first nights he even came out on the dance floor for a brief few seconds, but the crowd swarmed him and he quickly left. Wish he could've stayed and really gotten his groove on with us.

#### Secret hiding place

Here's a secret many at the parties did not know: for most of the performances Prince was sitting *behind* the speaker stack on the left hand side (when you face the stage). He would occasionally go up and sit/lay with his girlfriend and/or Larry Graham on the platform behind the stage and stare out at the crowd. It was pitch black in that platform/speaker corner and he was just like a little kid loving the fact that most of the crowd didn't know he was there.

He only came onstage once during all the performances — to help out the keyboardist with his equipment during Taja's set. One other time he jumped down to the stage after a few girls flirted with him and asked him, "Was he scared?". That brought him right down, he saucily said, "What do you all want calling me like that?". Unfortunately the girls had *no* response to that and just gaped. He smiled and went back up to his perch. Those on the opposite side of the room, not seeing any of this interaction, thought he'd jump down for an impromptu performance and stormed the stage to no avail.

#### Funny story

A lady I ran into at Axel's (a restaurant) and her husband told me what happened to them at the party the night before. They had spotted Prince in his behind-the-speaker hiding place during the band set. She is not as big a fan as her hubbie so was calm enough to say "hi" to him and appear normal. Prince came right over to her and started to talk. Another girl, unknown to this couple, was standing nearby. She saw Prince approach and lost it. She reached out and grabbed his arm! He turned, thumped the girl on the forehead with his thumb and forefinger. In shock she released his arm and he quickly left. I bet that girl still hasn't washed her head!

The woman whom he had been talking to thought it was amusing but we all agreed that whoever this girl is ruined a great moment as she had said he was in a quiet corner and looked ready to chat for a bit prior to the arm-grab. After learning that story, the had thump became our own in-joke for the week — we practiced it every chance we got.

#### Paisley tour

I won't review the Paisley Park tour here — others have done a good job describing what you see. We did ours the first day and rushed through. We should have waited, but were too excited. Our guide was Chad. And our tour group was so quiet and reverential that I wanted to say, "Cheer up — he's still alive!". I kept having Graceland flashbacks throughout and that made me feel a bit sombre and grateful that we got this opportunity before we lose him to the afterlife.

Outside of Paisley at the side "picnic area," I played on the swing set and all you ladies *know* about that rope swing from *Beautiful Strange*. I also talked to the juice vendor and got their card — should anyone care to know where he buys his incense, hippie candles, and mixed juices.

The first day we visited the Paisley Garage Sale we went a little crazy, at least I did! I grabbed one of each thing, no matter if I had it or not. I was just not passing up on those \$1 T-shirts, posters, hats, etc. We returned every morning thereafter to buy whatever new items were put out. I heard at one point they had symbol t-shirts out for \$5 each — missed out on those! In the end I think I got enough loot, took two boxes and a large roll of posters to mailboxes on our last morning to ship home.

#### Day trips

Most of our days were taken up by Prince-related site-seeing — dipped my toes in Lake Minnetonka, took lots of photos of fams in front of First Avenue, ran into a crowd outside Fine Line Café due to President Clinton visiting inside, shopped at Calhoun Square, etc.

One of the days was the prerequisite trip to the Mall of America. After snapping some pics with Snoopy, we caught up to Morris Hayes and visiting family near a few of the Camp Snoopy rides. I think I must have had five different conversations with him that week. This one was a quick "we're not following you," but the last one I had with him at the Northrop afterparty we talked for quite some time about his art background, his family, and his future plans.

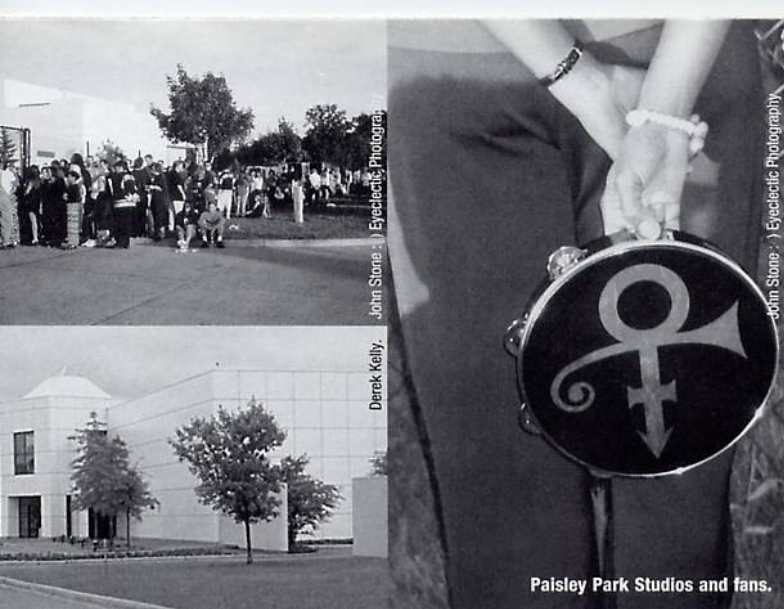
Also got to chat a few times with Kirk Johnson and his family members, Brown Mark, and a quick hello from Billy "Sunglasses." Kirk, Kayla, and Kathleen Johnson were all very warm every time I saw them. I bought Kathleen's CD of her group BKS and highly recommend TKO's CD that I've been chillin' with for a few years now. Kirk's daughter Kayla is just six, by the way. When she got up onstage with the Fonky Baldheads the grin on Prince's face almost split his head in two. He looked more proud of her than even her papa was. Very sweet to witness. And contrary to other reviews and reports she is *not* a boy, she plays a mean horn, and she can *dance* her funky shoes off.

I also had a long talk with Taja Sevelle plus her band. Still don't know how it happened, but after buying her CD I talked to her assistant about her possible coming to Washington DC again and he asked if I'd like to meet her. Uh, yeah. After her performance, I was dancing and not really thinking it was going to happen, making plans to leave soon, when the assistant asked me to stand to the side and after waiting a bit took myself and two other ladies from DC upstairs to the Paisley dressing room. At this point I was ecstatic at just getting to see a room that was not part of the regular tour!

Taja's band, manager, and label president were in there and we talked for an hour or so. They apologised that Taja was late, saying she was in a "meeting" with Prince. Turns out later Taja said he was just chatting up her parents (who live locally) and turning on the old purple charm. When I heard the music stopping downstairs and the party breaking up, I excused myself and said I need to let my friends know where I was. I quickly located them and brought them back up with me, along with a few extras.

Taja arrived soon after and gave us all personal autographs, was gracious and





Paisley Park Studios and fans.

chatted with each person individually. She is finishing work on her album this summer under her own label, Matrix Music. Then plans on touring Europe, followed by the US. What I had purchased was basically an eight-song demo/promo CD for that album. The rapper, Sunny, who had performed with her that night, also gave out a promo CD of his upcoming single and I got what I believe is the first autograph he has ever given.

The band were all very sweet and could not say enough good things about how well Prince and The NPG band had treated them during their stay there that week. They said Prince had watched their rehearsals and the band had seen some of The NPG rehearsing. I quizzed them on songs played and got a nice preview of the Northrop show.

#### Local news

We also caught a few local news broadcasts of the weeks' events – and us with no VCR in the hotel. The local news mainly just said the same facts as you have all heard and liked to focus on the fans from far away places such as UK and Japan. They also discussed the locals' reactions to it all.

One report on Monday evening on WCCO-TV was entitled "Prince's PR Disaster." It said that fans who'd come so far were being turned away at the door and how heartbroken they were, etc. I checked later with the staff and they said that no one was turned away and they were bewildered at the report. The only thing I can make sense of is that the limited number of day-tour passes ran out and that is what the late-comers who flew in for the Northrop show the next night had counted on getting.

#### Northrop show

As for Northrop itself, while it was hell getting in and to our seats, it was worth it! A complete version of "Adore" was worth the \$70. And not just complete, but embellished, heartfelt, and intense. Ladies, he worked himself out on this one.

Many people have given the setlist and discussed the show, so I'll keep it brief. Just say that he *did* endorse bootlegging when he introduced "Days Of Wild" by saying, "If you are a real fan you know this one." And then instructing everyone on the "wild sign" to keep the middle finger down – as that was cussing. "We don't cuss no more" indeed, we heard a few slips on that one but we're not complaining...

I almost had a heart attack when he handed the guitar George Benson gave him to a girl in the front row! He had broken a string and was fed up with it at that point I believe. I later heard that his guitar tech went out and retrieved it along with the sheet music from the purple notebook that he kept kicking out into the crowd. What I want to know is who caught that gold chain he threw out? And did they have to give that back too?

To say Prince was in a good mood that night would be a *major* understatement – just to see that smile made my week. I saw a whole different person perform and was really touched when he said "these have been the best seven days of my life." Up to then I had no idea how he felt about us tramping thru his offices, studios, etc, but looks like we had not worn out our welcome even by the last night.

#### Northrop afterparty

After the show we rushed back for the after-party (about 2:30 am). We were immediately told "invite only" in no uncertain terms – but they didn't call the cops

or clear us out so we waited around and talked with friends. Dr. Fink, Brown Mark, and Bobby Z. came in and out and chatted briefly. Most of the crowd left, but by 4 am anyone outside was let inside. As usual at Paisley, persistence and patience pays off.

This was a decidedly different atmosphere than the Celebration nights. I would say a lot fewer die-hard fans and a number of people who were just there to part-ee. Doug E. Fresh was DJing and gave the DC folks a wave and a shout-out. Thanks!

Prince arrived shortly after we got in and started playing video clips of the show we had just watched. Felt so bizarre – him watching us watching him perform – a performance we had just watched. Huh? He was dressed way down in a white T-shirt with sleeves and neck cut-out, fresh out of a shower, clean hair, blown straight, no make-up. He looked all of 12 years old.

As with all previous party nights, it did not end until dawn (5:30 to 6:00 am) and the fresh smell of Pillsbury's baking plant down the road. That night I also got to chat with Brown Mark for a bit. You might ask: when did we sleep? What sleep?

## Sensory Overload

By Derek Kelly

We got to the Park on Saturday (June 10th) evening for the party. A friend reported to me about a lot of the goings-ons, but I still didn't really know what to expect as we stood on line. First day in, I already ran into a ton of people I knew. Initially, mainly people I had seen previously at the Prince fest, but later I was meeting a lot of my fellow New Power New Yorkers, which was extremely cool for me.

I hung out all Saturday and watched people dance (because, of course, I don't dance). I got constantly updated reports from various people all night about where Prince was and wasn't, which was pretty funny because they all conflicted. It was kind of annoying that 2,000 VIP passes were sold, but they could never fit 2,000 people in the smaller Love 4 One Another room. So a lot of people got separated and never actually got into the L4OA room until late in the night.

#### These are the Days Of Wild

New York's very own Days Of Wild performed live in Paisley Park, which was kind of cool, but also a major annoyance for me considering I don't spend 15 minutes see them in NYC, let alone travel all the way out to MPLS to see them for about two hours. The band was tight as always. I am big fan of horns so I was really feeling them. Choreography was definitely needed, though. Plus some work on their stage presence. Considering they usually work on a much smaller stage, it was kind of understandable.

Throughout the night various videos were shown through video projectors. The special Celebration videos that were created for each day were very cool to see. Various fans were interviewed, sang or just hammed it up for the camera, which was very amusing.

Since each night had a special theme, video montages were made for each night. Saturday was Batman theme so we treated the various *Batman* album videos. There is actually only three for that album ("Batdance," "Partyman," and "Scandalous") and most were edited from actual movie footage ("Trust" and "Arms Of Orion"). Concert footage from a really good show that I didn't recognise was also shown that night.

#### Sunday

We headed back to Park to go on the tour and do some shopping. Did some line skipping and waited and waited... Then started to roam around to talk to the various people on line. Prince fans are like the coolest people. I met people from all over the place. Went in the back and had Fruit Smoothie from the tables in the back. Almost dared to have a Veggie Burger, but I was already risking my life with the "organic" fruit in the smoothie.

Finally, we went in for the tour. Paisley Park really isn't that big of a place. All the pictures and video I have seen have made the place seem larger than life. Security was tight and each tour saw something a bit different. I know of tours that actually got to go in the room in front of the vault. All we got to do was crane our head in and look at the door, which I thought was really funny. Some of the studios and things we saw were interesting, but it wasn't really my thing. It was like going on a tour of someone's apartment – not really a big deal for me. I need free reign of the place to really enjoy it, I guess. I entertained myself as always during the tour with some funny anecdotes and pretended to know what I was talking about. I probably confused most of the people in our group with my Chaka Khan falling down the badly lighted purple stairs story, he he.

At the end of the tour went to grab some junk from the garage sale. Things



were dirt cheap, but also nothing that you would bother to really buy. Posters were five for \$1, NPG Dance Company T-shirts, NPG skullies, various cassettes and LPs, "The Most Beautiful Girl In The World" video, audio cassette and normal and promo CD. They were giving away the *Emancipation* lyric books (by the way, I have four – anyone want one?) and Get Wild perfume (got three bottles, but I have no intention of wearing that crap – ever noticed that Prince doesn't).

In the NPG store the prices were higher. T-shirts were \$30 and sweaters \$57. I almost bought this cool red NPG sweater, but changed my mind considering it is summer now and it's useless to me. I did get me and my godson a Prince: Celebration T-shirt to wear when we go hang out. One thing I thought was humorous in The NPG Store was that Larry Graham's G-clef pendant was given away free with any \$50 dollar purchase. I'm glad they didn't give me one – I would have given it back.

#### Sunday night

Had already heard Mint Condition was going to perform so I was psyched. Their show was awesome! Those guys kick ass. Not only did they do some of their hits like "Pretty Brown Eyes," but they also did some covers, Latin, jazz, etc. I really enjoy their show. Only thing that would have been cooler was if Prince would have jumped in for at least one song. Anyway, I would love to one day see these boys live again. A dance party continued after the performance.

*Purple Rain* was Sunday's theme so a very long *Purple Rain* theme video was compiled. It included videos, interviews, live performances, and rare movie footage. A lot of music award footage was shown and it was a very special treat to see Prince perform "Purple Rain" at the American Music Awards since I had never seen that before.

#### Monday

At this point I was exhausted. Two nights of partyin' till the dawn can really take a toll on someone. Hung out in various places in Minneapolis. Went to the Mall of America – that is one disgustingly big mall. The joint had a mini-amusement park in the middle of it. I am talkin' roller coaster, merry-go-rounds, log ride, etc. Best part of the mall for me was Camp Snoopy. I found my Charlie Brown chillin' in on a shelf with his hat backwards. As soon as I saw it, I knew I had to have him.

One thing I noticed about MPLS is that there is nothing "Princely" outside of Paisley Park. I would have thought that they would have people selling Prince crap on the side of the road or in the stores or something. The guys in the mall that do caricatures didn't even have Prince pictures out. It's like they didn't know we were coming. Big mistake!

Later that night we decided not to go to the Park because nothing was really going on. There was no act scheduled and Prince was rehearsing with the band at Northrop, so I didn't see the point. It was time to get some rest... But back we went to the Park, which was a good idea considering we wouldn't be seeing a lot of the folks in this type of setting for a long time. In the Park it was basically dead. Billy Sparks was there and Prince's mom was placed on the sofa to watch the anarchy that her son created. I really wonder what she makes of all this.

Prince showed up and hung out, going back and forth from the soundboard to the studio. You should have seen the scene by the soundboard. People stood there gawking like Prince was a Panda bear in the Zoo. I really don't get that. Prince is a man like everyone else. They were even more pathetic than the people that stood vigil in front of the Love 4 One Another stage every night, all night waiting for Prince to perform...

#### Tuesday

This was *the day*. The reason I was here. I got a friend to give us a mini-Minnie tour, which basically consisted of the old purple house (where Prince's dad now lives) and a peak over the hill to the area where Prince currently lives. Didn't really have time for some of other stuff. Afterwards we headed out to the Northrop Auditorium. What a mess that was! None was there to direct the traffic after the closest garage was packed. Then they let people into the building, but the auditorium wasn't ready so hundreds of people packed the lobby like sardines. God forbid something bad would have happened and we all had to exit the building really fast... I leave it up to others to describe the concert itself – I need some rest after several days of sensory overload!

### The Event Of The Year

By Jill Primous

The Prince: A Celebration extravaganza event that could only have been outdone by a concert (or should I say an aftershow) was truly the event of the year for

me. The concert that did bring a conclusion to the "celebration" was three hours and 45 minutes of "funkin' for no reason" (you had to be there).

Leading up to this event was five days (and nights) of sheer delight for me and my girls (Monika, Keta, Karla and Tawana). We left for MPLS on Friday, 9th, at around 12:30 pm for what is normally a six to seven-hour drive. A dead-end due to a over-turned truck caused the drive to be a lot longer so we didn't arrive at Paisley Park until around 11:30 pm. We were too late to secure our VIP pack (nasty security guy that night) and missed the "theme" party for the evening. I decided not to fight it and took our angry (and tired) bodies to our hotel room and called it a night.

#### Saturday

On Saturday, we arose, got dressed and headed straight to the Park to see our packets. The "packets" consist of a VIP pass for each of us, a CD case fold-out booklet giving us our "schedule of events" for the week (but no CD) and of course our tickets for the concert. After being told that we would only be allowed to tour the Park once per pass, we decided to come back another day for tour. We just walked around a bit to check things out.

There were two long lines: VIP line and non-VIP line (lots of locals in non-VIP line). The VIP tour was a longer tour than the non-VIP. The area on the left side of the Park had booths set up (carnival-like) serving food (veggie burritos, fries, and "NPG" water with labels on the bottles displaying the "NPG" logo in white letters). To the right side of the main entrance was the entrance to the "store," garage and the "museum."

We left the Park without really exploring anything else to find food and a little sightseeing: First Avenue (the famous "stars" that were on the outside, have been painted over), The old Glam Slam, now The Quest (still had the picture windows), a quick stop at the Mall Of America then back to the hotel to freshen up for that night's "theme" party.

We arrived at the Park around 11:00 pm (not knowing at this time about space limitation to the small sound stage room). After having our VIP passes checked twice we proceeded to "party" in the larger room. The nightly parties, although endearing at times, each held their own bit of excitement. The first party (the theme of Batman, complete with videos from that era some redone with footage from the movie) that we attended was hosted by the cover band Day After Wild.

Days Of Wild's set lasted for about 2 hours, with non-stop music from Prince and the New Power Generation. We had not been able to enter the Love 4 One Another room (where the band was playing) until after the set was over. We could see and hear the band on the video screens though. Once in the smaller room (L4OA) we were privy to a few sightings of Prince: at the DJ booth, at his "perch" over the stage (where he was seen talking to one female companion on the upper level and then came down to talk to yet another female), and (my most memorable) at the soundboard where he was standing. He was all into his music as a video of his was being played on the huge walls inside the room. Head bobbin' and drums sticks tappin'... just gently into the music.

The party was much more lively inside the L4OA room. Of course, you could see some folks hovering around the now empty stage in anticipation of a performance but the majority of the folks were just dancing and having a good time. We left the first night until closing (around 4:15 am), which was a repeat showing of the new "Hot With U" video. And that was that!

#### Sunday

On Sunday, we decided to take the tour of the Park. While standing in line we were asked questions and video-taped by a guy (at the time we didn't realise some of this footage would end up in a film called "Celebration"). As we entered the doorway of the Park our passes were hole punched, which meant for sure we could only do the tour once. I personally enjoyed the tour, although it was rushed at times.

I had been through the Park before but not to the upstairs area. While waiting for our tour guide, we had a chance to look at the various awards housed in the glass casing alongside one wall. To the right of the doorway is a staircase leading to the second level. The walls along this area are painted blue with white decorative lines. Purple carpet with gold symbols embedded in them lead the way to the kitchen area. The kitchen is set up like a restaurant complete with black and white colored booths and a purple feeding dish for the cats.

We had the pleasure of seeing the vault – yes, it does exist and it contains enough material to release one new album for the next 20 years. We also saw the conference room, the equipment room, past the doves in their cages on the upper level, the game room (a pool table with a purple top, jukebox and a painting of Miles Davis adorn the walls), the weight room (that's how he keeps that



firm), the recording studios, various awards from Prince's past and present. We also had the opportunity to speak with Kirk Johnson while visiting one of the recording studios and were allowed to sit and ask him and the engineer a few questions (yes, that was him, Damon and Tony dancing in *Purple Rain*).

We were told that Studio A is where albums like *Emancipation* were recorded and that Prince records all his vocal here alone. The chair that Prince was sitting in on the photo from our passes was also here (mad scramble to sit there by all). The soundboard was *huge* and a photo of Prince's father sit in plain view. All chairs/couches are covered with plush velvet and are quite low to the ground.

After the "tour" we were led through the garage (where the "Sexy MF" video was shot) and onto the garage sale. It was indeed a garage sale... all items \$5 and under: posters, CDs, VIP passes from past tours, vinyl, cassettes, T-shirts, everything must go!

The museum, although quaint, was still exciting to the eye. Cars featured in videos such as "Betcha By Golly, Wow!", "Gangster Glam" (the "chikita" yellow is now gold), the one from the *Goldnigga* cover, and the T-Bird from *Under The Cherry Moon* among others. Prince's piano from the *Rave* TV special was on display as well as the "Beautiful" piano. His clothing from different eras were suspended from the walls, each with their own story to tell, I'm sure. You could also sign the guest book to the NPGonlineLTD site at the PC's along one wall.

Tour over and we were back at our hotel to get ready for the party. The theme was *Purple Rain* and the band to appear was Mint Condition. I'm pretty familiar with the music of Mint Condition so I was looking forward to seeing them live. We had a *long* wait before the band came on but it was worth it. I only wish that they had done more of their ballads, but it was all good. Again we had a Prince sighting after the concert... this time he was at the DJ booth and he played a few unreleased cuts for us, including "Splash" and "Cybersingle." Now that was funky way to bring in the dawn! Again we stayed until closing, 4:15 am and off we were!

## Monday

Third night for us was "3 Chains Of Gold." No band although our schedule said band "TBA." We arrived at the Park at around 8:00 am, entered the gates at around 9:30 pm only to find yet another crowd around the entrance to the L4OA room. It didn't take to long for Prince's bodyguard Aaron and his crew to haul us into the smaller room. Again folks surrounded the empty stage with hope that "TBA" just might be a Prince performance... *not!*

We had a wilder than usually party and a few more Prince sightings (him at his "perch" watching the crowd do the "humpty hump"... I sure he had a laugh). There was a moment when Prince was viewing a video and he was so into it that even his companion couldn't get his attention. We again stayed around until closing and went to our hotel for some much needed sleep.

## The concert

Fourth night was the concert. You have already read enough reviews, but I must say that it was awesome. Highlights of the performance included a full, soulful rendition of "Adore" (even did the "maybe not the ride" line), performances from QTip, Angie Stone, Maceo Parker and of course seeing Dr. Fink, Brown Mark, and Bobby Z. together on stage again. However, I think Prince embarrassed Bobby when he asked Bobby to do a "kick drum" and Bobby didn't/couldn't deliver. Prince then asked Bobby to leave and had Kirk to replace him. Prince was indeed in a good mood. He even danced with a girl from the audience during the encore.

After the concert we all headed back to the Park to see if anything was up. On our way from the concert we spotted a limo speeding by us and then a car in close pursuit with Aaron at the wheel. Needless to say, the chase was on! At one point, we were in between the limo and Aaron so he starts flashing his lights at us (gee, I didn't know he was a policeman!). It was a wild ride to the Park to say the least.

When we arrived at the Park we find out that it was an "invitation only" party. Special passes were given out at the end of the concert to a select few. Still, we managed to get in. Again a few Prince (a more relaxed and happy Prince) sightings and then we had to leave - long drive back 2 Chi-town ahead of us. Upon walking out to our car we see the "Purple Prowler" pouring out of the side entrance of the Park. I won't tell ya what happened after that (I'm still embarrassed), but we now know where Prince's new home is located.

Prince did come back to the Park and it appeared that he brought back some video footage from the concert we had just witnessed because it was now being played through the sound system. The music was booming all over the Park as the sun came up! What a way to end an experience I will never forget.

## Tearing It Up At Northrop

By John Andrew Piehowski

Before the show started there was a clip of all the happenings of this passed week mixed with old footage and music videos. The stage was not decorated at all. It was very "no frills." Just the instruments and a big screen that the "footage" was played on. During the songs the screen changed scenery and sometimes had some words pop up. It looked very cheap... but who cares.

Prince kicked off with "Anna Stesia." There was a keyboard set up in the centre of the stage and that's where he sang it from. He came out in black slacks and a white shirt with flared arms, just like that baggy one from the "Tick, Tick, Bang" clip in *Graffiti Bridge*. He had everyone sing the "God is love..." chant and exclaimed that there is nothing without God and that if you don't believe in Jesus he "ain't got nothin' to say to ya." "Anna Stesia" was cool to hear live, but to start out with it and continue in such a low-key vibe with "The Greatest Romance Ever Sold" really showed some balls. There were two girls dancing on the stage at different points in the night. They didn't really add much, in my opinion. And we've all seen Cat and Mayte do it much better.

Prince started talking about God again during "TGRES," claiming that God is the "The Greatest." Then, during the loop for "TGRES" Prince started doing the verses for "4 The Tears In Your Eyes," which was kind of interesting. He kicked off the next song saying, "Let's see if ya'll remember this one..." and launched into an abbreviated version of "Uptown." It was so good to hear that song live again! He did flub the words a bit... maybe he couldn't see his lyric book (he was using it quite a bit during the show). He continued with the "Let's Work"/"Delirious" medley, which is always fun.

"Your love is unconditional..."

Then it was "Purple Rain" time and Prince did the full version (which is always nice to hear) and changed some of the words a little bit. At the end of the second verse he sang to the fans, "I believe your love is unconditional... I believe this friendship will never end." Aww shucks, that was kinda nice. After some of the usual blistering guitar that ends "Purple Rain," Prince started talking to the audience. He noticed Dr. Fink in the crowd and told him he'd better come on up and jam before the night is through. He also made a crack at how much Fink has aged by saying that he looked like he did on the cover of *Around The World In A Day*, in which he is painted as an old man. But then he told Fink not let anyone make fun of how he looked and if they did to reply, "Don't hate me cuz I'm beautiful" and into "Prettyman" we go! This song live is *so much* better than the recorded version. And The Hornheadz and Maceo Parker definitely spruced it up. During the "if there comes a time that it just wont grow" part he sang, "I'll just do like Elton John and buy some more," referring to his hair, obviously.

After "Prettyman," Prince started talking shit about how great he is. He was utilising the phrase, "Why should I do that, when I can do this" repeatedly and even rhymed with "pissed." And I thought he didn't curse! Larry was standing there and everything! Ooooooooooh! All of a sudden the groove for "Breathe And Stop" was kicking and before we knew it Q-Tip was out there doing it. Doug E Fresh came out and did his beatbox thang and a bit of "La-Di-Da-Di." It was pretty cool. Then, Tip did "Vivrant Thing" and they were gone. After "Come On," which featured some audience members onstage dancing and Prince singing the guitar solo harmonised with the keys, he left the stage and turned it over to Najee for some smooth jazz while he changed clothes.

"Play that muthafuckin' bass!"

Prince came back wearing what looked like a copper-coloured velvet two piece. He picked up a guitar and launched into a very pretty instrumental version of "The Question Of U." Him and Najee were trading licks at one point, which was very dramatic. After that, Prince immediately went into "When You Were Mine." This got cut in half and suddenly Prince grabbed the one-eyed bass and funky up "Days Of Wild." This tune lasted quite awhile and was missing all of the swearing. Prince even admonished the crowd for chanting his coined phrase, "Play that muthafuckin' bass" and said, "We don't use them words no more!". The song was pretty funky but *not* '95 era NPG funky, if you know what I mean.

Before Prince ended "Days Of Wild," he started doing this really freaky little monologue whilst playing some spooky bass notes. He was saying something about "a man who thinks he's self created is a *fool*" and that he was standing behind him "with an army behind him" and that he was "sneaking up on you." *Very weird!* He was trying to get deep but sounded even more insane that the whole "who screamed" shit during the *Purple Rain* show.

Then followed some music that I thought was for sure "Silly Game" but it was actually an Angie Stone song. And out comes Angie and her back-up singers. The sound was very bad during this song and it was kind of disappointing. But it got



noticeably better when they tore up Aretha Franklin's "Dr. Feelgood." It was like church up in there. After that, they left and Prince, at the keyboards, dueted with Kip on a second verse-less version of "Nothing Compares 2 U." I was waiting for Rosie to come out but she never did. Hmm, it was great to hear, nevertheless. Vocally, Prince was top notch tonight. I was *very* impressed. Following this was the "Take Me With U"/"Raspberry Beret" medley but even more abbreviated than usual. It got a great response but I'm sure everyone wishes he would have done them longer. Then it was Larry's turn. We politely listened to "The Jam" and "Everyday People" which were ever-funky as always but I for one have heard these songs too many times.

#### Encores

Encore time and it was like we were screaming for seven years! Prince finally came back out to the strains of the instrumental "Man 'O' War" strings and counted off into the actual song. That's one of my favourites from *Rave* so I was certainly pleased to hear it (even thought the backup samples were failing) but he only sang one verse/chorus before a key change signalled the beginning of a long horn-laden version of "Adore." This song was absolutely *perfect*. The vocals on it were stellar and unquestionably the best of the night. Those high notes just shoot out of him with almost no effort! It was very beautiful.

Then Prince started launching into some rhythm guitar while taking a look around for his old buddies. Brown Mark was first on the stage, then Dr. Fink, in full hospital scrubs, and finally Bobby Z. After he introduced each one of them he wisecracked, "Mmmmm! Shapely!". I knew they'd be there but it still sent chills up my spine to see them up there playing together. Prince said to them, "So, if I call out something you gonna know it?". They didn't look too scared of that. So Prince said to Mark, "What country you from?" repeatedly before yelling out "lead line" and we were off into "America." This was by far the highlight for me. I almost was a little misty-eyed. And if Wendy and Lisa came out I would've been weeping! But they didn't.

"America" continued for a verse and chorus and Prince gave each of the guys a chance to solo. After Bobby's solo, Prince called out "kick drum." And it sounded like that's what Bobby gave him but Prince laughed and said, "What, man! Don't you remember?". And Prince proceeded to *kick him off the drums* calling Kirk back, saying something like, "Accept no substitutions!". I was like, *no he didn't!* I felt really bad for Bobby.

"America" turned into the end of the *Sign O' The Times* movie version of "It's Gonna Be A Beautiful Night." The audience was even yelping out the Princely "yaow" parts on the last horn vamp. Now you know it was nothing but real fans in the house after hearing that! Even though *The Revolution* is all old and everything, I still think it would be incredible to see them together playing a show, one last time. That one verse of "America" alone was worth the 70 bucks!

Prince closed the show by doing "Kiss" with a lot of audience participation and "Gett Off"/"Houstyle" that turned into a long funky jam utilising Doug E. Fresh's beatbox and Tip's.... well... presence? More people were brought out to dance and Prince ended the song by singing the "Push It Up" rap with Doug E. And that was it. It was quite a show! Even though it definitely had its flaws, Prince really turned out a set that had a little bit for everyone. He can't do them all but he sure did try. I was definitely pleased.

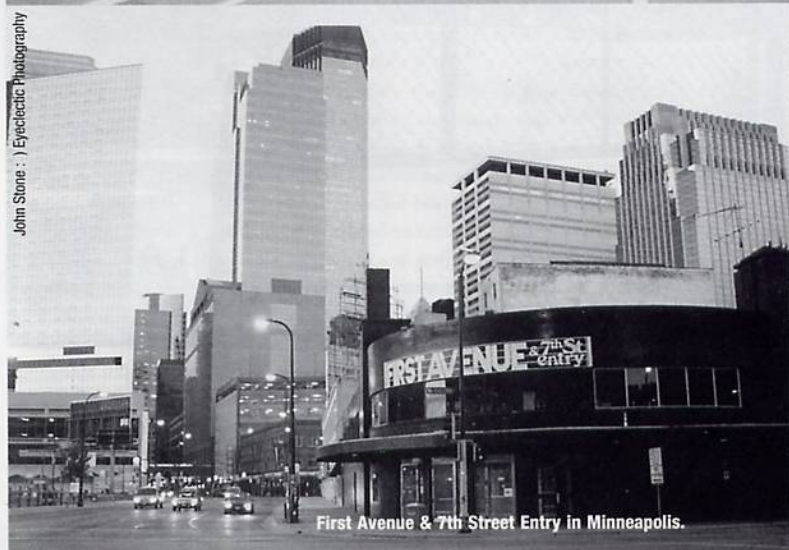
### "So many songs, so little time"

By Brendan Patrick Crilly

Prince says he usually likes to prepare three or four months before doing a major concert but tonight was different – they were just going to jam and be loose. In other words, "Excuse the imperfections, we didn't have much time to put this all together." He said that soon they would be putting together a proper tour and visiting a town near you.

I'd say a majority of the concert was pretty much what he's been doing the last three or four years, meaning mostly old material, shortened versions of the usual suspects, and medleys. Although, due to quite a bit of jamming, new special guests, and the inclusion of a few older songs that haven't been performed in quite some time, there was still a fair amount of freshness to the proceedings. There was also a lot of very special guitar playing by Prince. At several points, Prince went above and beyond his normal playing and really went for something special.

Those who came only to see Prince and aren't into jamming were surely disappointed by this concert, as it contained heavy doses of both. Prince ran much of the show from his keyboard which was perched high above the stage floor, right in the centre of the band. He looked like he was having a blast throwing commands over to The Hornheads, Maceo Parker, and Kirky Johnson on this left. Najee, Larry Graham, and Mr. Hayes on his right.



A new video was played on a large screen above and behind the stage for the opening of the concert. The video was a retrospective of Prince's career, mixed with shots of the Celebration and interviews with some of the attendees. The biggest crowd response came when the video for "My Name Is Prince" was briefly shown.

#### Part 1

Intro: Najee on the sax. "Anna Stesia": Prince on keyboard and lead vocal. The crowd seemed stunned by the inclusion of this song. Next was "The Greatest Romance Ever Sold." By the end, it turned more religious than romantic.

"Uptown," "Let's Work," and "Delirious" followed. "Delirious" closed with a very jazzy Prince guitar solo with loads of improvisation. "Purple Rain": A shortened, by-the-numbers version that lasted four or five minutes. Shortening this grand song seemed to take much of the life out of it. It's hard to really feel the epic finish when he rushes through the foreplay.

Prince put the spotlight on Dr. Fink in the audience and the crowd went wild. Prince cracked, "It looks like he's been around the world in a day." He then said, "Dr. Fink, do you know what you tell people who take shots at your looks?" Prince immediately gave the answer away in song, "Don't hate me cause I'm beautiful!" This kicked right into "Prettyman" and the crowd roared its approval.

"Prettyman": Maceo Parker and Najee go head-to-head on the sax. Prince started talking a lot but I could not make out half of it. He said something about Larry Graham and Sly and the Family Stone having an agreement back in the day whereby they would never play with another band. Then he explained that Larry turned down the chance to play with Jimi Hendrix because of this particular band rule. Prince then proceeded to get all over Larry's case for blowing such an unbelievable opportunity.

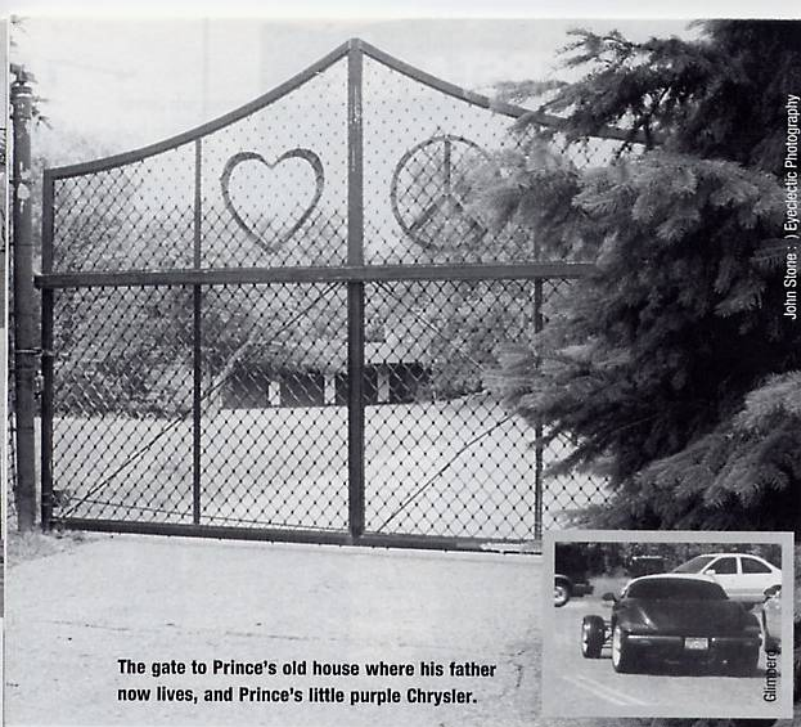
"Breathe And Stop": Q-tip, Prince on drums. "La Di Da Di": Doug E. Fresh. "Vivrant Thing": Prince on Purple Axse. "Come On": People invited on stage to dance. Intermission: Najee played.

#### Part 2

"The Question Of U" (instrumental): Prince played purple symbol guitar and Najee eventually joined him on the sax. "When You Were Mine": Played with very heavy guitar and a long guitar solo at the end.

"Days Of Wild": Prince on his one-eyed Bass. Prince told the audience that "this is theme song for The NPG," then proceeded to skip all of the curse words. Crowd started chanting "Play that muthafuckin' bass". Prince ran around the stage in a mock panic, yelling, "No, we don't do that anymore!" and offered an alternative to the chant by getting the crowd to wave their "wild sign" in the air.





The gate to Prince's old house where his father now lives, and Prince's little purple Chrysler.

"No More Rain (In This Cloud)": Angie Stone on lead vocals and Prince on keyboard running the show. "Dr. Feelgood": Angie Stone and Maceo Parker were featured. Turned into another big jam session. Angie Stone laid out a vocal so powerful some of the stonework in the auditorium cracked. Prince said, "What do I do now? My dad always told me that when you have to follow something really incredible you play a ballad." "Nothing Compares 2 U": Kip Blackshire and Prince traded off on lead vocals and there was a Kathy Jensen sax solo. Then followed the "Take Me With U"/"Raspberry Beret" medley.

Larry Graham bass solo turned into "The Jam." The entire band was introduced, including The Hornheads. After all introductions Prince – in an obvious attempt to quell the rampant Larry Graham and Kirk Johnson criticism of late – told the audience if they are with him they also better have Larry's and Kirk's because they are his good friends. "Everyday People" followed.

#### Encore #1

"Man 'O' War": A shortened version. Next was a full, 10-minute version of "Adore." Anyone that was thinking Prince was losing a little edge to his falsetto will have to rethink his or her position after this performance. Prince set forth a dynamic, ever increasing falsetto that ended with screams so high-pitched that the masonry work Angie Stone had cracked earlier moved into full cardiac crumble. Perhaps the greatest version of this song ever performed?

Very small break taken. It's debatable whether or not this was enough of a break to consider the next section as the second encore or just a continuation of the first and only encore.

#### Encore #2

Prince invited Brown Mark on stage to see if he still had his chops on the bass. He then invited Dr. Fink up to do the same on the keyboards. He continued to chide them about the extra pounds that they've acquired. Then Prince told them that he does "this every week, are you going to be able to keep up no matter what song I call out?". He then asked, "Where do you live?" several times before ripping into "America."

"America": Brown Mark on bass, Dr. Fink on keyboards, Kirky J. initially on drums, but part way through the song Prince challenged Bobby Z. to get out there on the skins. All three ex-Revolution members had their moment in the solo spotlight. Dr. Fink in particular didn't seem to have lost anything. And yes, Dr. Fink was in full surgical attire. Prince at one point asked Bobby Z. for some kick drum and Bobby either didn't hear him or was having problems getting familiar with the drum set-up, because no kick drum was returned. Prince joked, "He must have gone deaf over the years." He eventually replaced Bobby with Kirk Johnson. The man runs a tight ship. You either keep up with him or you're booted off the stage.

"Talkin' Loud and Sayin' Nothing": Lots of jamming and improvising. Angie Stone was called back out and The NPG eventually returned and the jam moved into a "funky for no reason" chant led by Prince and Angie Stone. Next came "Kiss" and "Gett Off."

Prince visited "Push It Up" and "Groove On" to build a free-form jam session

to end the concert. All guests who had participated came out one by one and did their thing until it was just one big nasty P-Funk jam. Doug E. Fresh was beat boxing. Q-tip was leading the crowd in chants and free styling. It was a sticky, sticky mess and it just kept going for 15 to 20 minutes, at times leaving almost no trace of what song they were using as a reference point. Near the end of this jam I sensed that a good deal of the audience was exhausted and ready to go home. "Love is God, God is love, girls and boys love God above" chant until the music completely faded out.

#### Reaching out for something new?

While touring Paisley Park I couldn't help but notice the very strong message emanating from one of its walls. This wall – which must have been over 150 feet in length – showed a pictorial timeline of Prince's career, starting at one end of the wall in 1978 and ending at the other end in the year 2000. The year 2000 simply had a question mark painted under it and it was displayed right where the wall ends and completely changes directions and meets up with another wall. If you didn't pick out the not-too-subtle metaphor, the tour guide made a point of telling our little group that Prince wanted us to know that this was indeed done intentionally.

While experiencing what turned out to be a very good concert I couldn't help but ponder if what I was witnessing was a type of closure of a particular era or simply another chance to show off and revel in past glories. Will Prince be content coasting through the remaining 20 to 25 years or so of his career touring with a "hits" revue I wondered? Or will he take to heart his own words during his performance of "Purple Rain" where he paused slightly and emphasized the need to "reach out for something new, and that means *me* and you too?" Will he be content with the amazing body of work that lies on the long wall behind him, or will he turn that corner, dig deep, find new colours and textures and create music that once again defies categorization and challenges himself and his audience?

#### Gone To See Prince

By CS Knox

It is 16 hours to drive from Toronto to Minneapolis, across a time zone that would favour us an hour of daylight. There was no way around it: we were on a Rock and Roll pilgrimage, even if The Man wasn't strictly Rock and Roll. Prince Rogers Nelson was to perform in his hometown three days hence, his given name intact,

and we had two tickets reserved. As an added incentive was a planned visit to his Sanctum Sanctorum, Legendary Recording Studio Paisley Park, open for public viewing for the first time in years and coinciding with an event-filled week, a Celebration of The Work of The Artist Once Again Known As Prince.

I have to go on record as not being Mr. Nelson's Number One Fan. Vanessa, my travelling companion, was the one who while in high school, wrote novels about the singer on purple paper with purple pens. Oh, sure, I've danced to his songs and respect the hell out of his manic prolificacy, his iconoclastic nature and musical ability, but driving 16 hours into Cheese Country, USA wasn't my idea. I'd be riding shotgun on the carriage of Vanessa's Edmonton-bred childhood fantasy, a wagon train that would take us across five states.

I have a high regard for a spontaneous gesture of communion at the Church of Rock and Roll, and if Graceland is the Vatican, then Paisley Park is a well-regarded parish, just up the winding rosary of the Mighty Mississippi to chilly Minnesota ("The cold keeps the bad people out," Prince has said). Seeing him perform in front of his hometown crowd would be like catching the Neville Brothers at Tipitina's on a Fat Tuesday (done that) or Eric Clapton at the Royal Albert Hall (oh, yeah, done that) or Springsteen and the E Street Band at The Stone Pony (still dreamin' about that one...).

#### Day one: The drive

Four am came early on Sunday, June 11th, and our drive seemed like Everest as seen from the Nepalese foothills. We slept in shifts and drove two and half tanks through Vanessa's shiny red 1992 Ford Fiesta.

It's five hours to get under the lake, through Gary, Indiana's gaping industrial maw, and into Chicago. The Fiesta had no air conditioning and it was very humid, and our pace was slowed by intermittent lashes of rain. We bickered and our skin oiled up and by 1 pm we weren't quite halfway there.

The light was almost gone when we found the Twin Cities. Minneapolis is segmented by freeways and the river and is confusing in the dark but we did find the hostel. The City of Lakes International House, a neo-hippie mellow hangout-temporary student and traveller residence, was perfect for our needs, located just south of downtown. The manager said that through the summer, Prince plays



every Friday night late out at The Park. I guessed his upcoming show would be old hat for the locals, then. Still, we were thrilled to be there in one piece, exhausted and happy.

#### Day two: The Park

Paisley Park is located in Chanhassen, a suburb southwest of Minneapolis. From where we were staying it took 25 minutes by car to reach via bumpy grey concrete overpasses and off-ramps. Chanhassen is a non-descript, grassy 'burb, stuffed with well-groomed industrial parks and friendly motor inns. A seemingly incongruous environment for Prince to have been raised in, given his urban, "international lover" appeal. Stranger still that he never left.

We found the studio surrounded by a black chain-link fence and flowerbeds of purple petunias, unmarked but for warnings to deter trespassers. It looked no different from the other low-rise office complexes that we'd passed and I was oddly reminded of "The Hot Zone," the account of an outbreak of Ebola in a Washington DC suburb. I reassured myself that the only virus ever bred behind this fence was the Funk.

We paid our \$15 for the tour and lined up amongst the zealots, waiting to pass through the metal detector. I counted four "symbol" tattoos in our group alone, and one pair of gold-lame shorts. We were definitely through the looking glass now. Vanessa could barely contain herself.

Inside, Paisley Park is colourful and idiosyncratic in complete contrast to its plain exterior. It is lushly carpeted, the walls airbrushed full of Prince related symbols and van-art landscapes where they aren't covered with silver, gold and platinum discs. A cabinet in the foyer displays Grammys, American Music Awards, MTV Awards, and most prominently, Prince's Academy Award for the score of his 1984 film *Purple Rain*. Our group were led into an atrium sky-lit and lovely with the Paisley Park doves silently watching from their balconied cages. Our guide informed us that the whole building, every single room, is wired so that Prince can set up his equipment and record anywhere he chooses. His song "The Pope" was recorded in the atrium.

Studio A is a sleek, wood-finished control centre with miles of board. There we were introduced to Kirk Johnson and The Fonky Baldheads, a hip-hop outfit recording a new album. Off behind the studio is a separate room for recording drum sequences that's lined with granite. We were led through adjoining rooms; one lit in ultraviolet, the other a lounge, and another a rehearsal space/basketball court.

In the rear of the building we found a museum of sorts put together especially for this event that displays Prince's various cars, motorcycles, guitars and costumes. Vanessa and I recognized the Buick Wildcat from Prince's 1986 film *Under The Cherry Moon*, in which he seduces Kristin Scott Thomas. The wardrobe on display seemed startlingly tiny, with lots of garishly coloured shawls, lacy, buttoned jackets, and trousers with stirrups, the kind of things my grandmother might wear if she did a lot of acid.

It was all pretty cool, even from my outsider's perspective, this cathedral and monument to Prince's achievements that he had built for himself. Vanessa sucked it all in like a crack-fiend, becoming giddier with each passing moment, periodically threatening to vomit from the excitement.

That evening, back in the city, we saw a band at First Avenue, the club in downtown Minneapolis made famous in *Purple Rain*. Once a Greyhound Bus Station, it is a great place to see live music. Afterwards, walking along past the historic Orpheum Theatre, I was happy to have a moment at 9th and Hennepin, an intersection which is the source of a Tom Waits song. Waits was my own teenage icon. Just wandering around downtown was so much fun. I really felt like I was connecting to the energy of this city and of its favourite son, and to Vanessa's excitement for being in a place she'd dreamed about since she was 11. We were looking forward to the concert experience...

#### Day 3: The show

We were visited early on Tuesday by two purple prophets. Having just finished breakfast in the sprawling three-fridge kitchen at the International House, we met a guy on the back porch whose name I missed but who I like to think of as Terry, due to his physical similarity to Terence Trent D'Arby. He'd been in Minneapolis all week and told tales of the all-night parties, the great shows which were put on as part of the Celebration, and how Prince had been seen mingling and talking to the fans that had come out. He also told us what to expect for that evening's performance: Paul McCartney and Carlos Santana were to be there, and he'd heard that Prince was attempting to have the curfew lifted so he could play all night. Leaning in close, Terry said that if someone were to give either of us a tambourine in the venue we should hang onto it as it would be as good as a backstage pass.

A few minutes later, after Terry had left us with his pronouncements of glory and magic, we met Dallas, a dude who'd driven 22 hours from Vanessa's home town of Edmonton. He had nothing good to say about the experience of being there. Along with two chums he'd been to all the parties ("boring") and seen Macy Gray ("she sucked") and said that Prince had been a complete no-show the whole week, which really bothered him as he'd come so far and expected some kind of acknowledgment from the Purple Pervert, as some have been known to call him.

These wildly divergent impressions had me curious, but I tried to limit my expectations. I collected my thoughts for my first audience with Prince and had to wonder... would he be an entertainer, playing all his hits in a specific, crowd pleasing sequence, or would he play the artist, cleaving to new material exclusively? Would he mix it up?

To avoid parking hassles we took the public transit to the Northrop Auditorium at the University of Minnesota where the gig was happening. Vanessa wore a slinky black dress and a purple feather wig that she'd picked up at a place called Tatters. It was one of the thrills of my life thus far to travel through suburban Minneapolis to a Prince concert on a crowded bus with a girl in an enormous feathered wig. The venue was cool if a little solemn, a 4,000-seater. The crowd was mixed, older than I'd expected, well-dressed and stylin'. Vanessa was proudly the freakiest one there. I was surprised to note the pre-show piped in music was the entire *Rave Un2 The Joy Fantastic* disc.

Prince came on at nine in a flowing white shirt surrounded by a fairly minimalist stage set, and he immediately confounded any imaginings I may have had for a raucous uptempo opening: after a short film clip of some of the "Celebration" week's events interspersed with video clips from years past, the first song he sang was "Anna Stesia," with its "God is love, love is God, girls and boys love God above" chorus.

I would have thought "My Name Is Prince" to be the obvious choice for opener given his recent re-baptism... But, as we discovered, the focus of the show was rarely Prince, and when it was, he was as much preacher as performer. Which I suppose jibed well with our pilgrimage headspace, though this was verging uncomfortably on the literal. "The Greatest Romance Ever Sold" was next and I could feel the crowd straining to dance to something. Prince acquiesced and finally exploded into a run-through of some of his earlier high-energy songs: "Delirious," "Uptown," and "Let's Work."

He had assembled quite a band, a fabulous five-piece horn section, drums, keyboards, and a variety of guitars. Prince danced and weaved, went through a few colourful costume changes culminating in a sparkly disco pantsuit, and played almost every instrument out there at one time through the show with amazing fluidity and passion. Not that he needed to, with Larry Graham on bass and Maceo Parker sitting in on a few songs with his sax, the band was a funk machine. Guest musicians and rap artists included Q-Tip, Doug E. Fresh and some of the original members of The Revolution. Dazzling soul singer Angie Stone came out to do her song "No Rain In This Cloud," and stunned us with her vocal power.

The show went on for two and a half hours, followed by an hour-long encore. We were treated to full treatments of songs like "Purple Rain" and "Nothing Compares 2 U," while others like "America," "Take Me With U," "Raspberry Beret," "Kiss," "Days Of Wild," and "Gett Off," became springboards for extended improvised jams. Of course, with Mr. Graham in the house, they couldn't resist an audience participatory version of "Everyday People." Prince did mix it up.

Vanessa and I danced our asses off and sang our voices hoarse. So, that admitted, it may seem churlish to offer critique when we certainly got our money's worth, but after the show, taking the 1 am bus back to the hostel, we both felt something was missing from the event. It wasn't so much a concert as a party jam, to the point of being self-indulgent, though maybe that's really what Prince is best known for, indulging himself. Granted, these were some of the most talented musicians I'd ever had the pleasure of seeing, but it seemed that maybe only a dozen of Prince's songs were actually played in the three-and-a-half hour show. And many of them were only alluded to before becoming fodder for instrumental explorations.

Having become an iconoclastic figure in music due to his intense creativity and brilliant songwriting, it seems something of a shame that Prince is entering the new millennium following the model put forth by the psychedelic, freeform funk of Sly and Parliament/Funkadelic 25 years ago when, with his obvious talent, he could be carving new movements in music. I suppose, at this stage in his career he has little to prove to anyone, least of all these Canucks who dropped in to see him. But I couldn't lose the feeling that there should have been more, scuppered by my expectations despite myself. All that said, Vanessa and I had a time that we'll not soon forget, and I enjoyed spending a couple of days plugged into her Purple Wonderland come to life.



# Every Want They Don't

During the "Prince Celebration" week, fans at Paisley Park were able to vote for songs for a projected *Crystal Ball Volume II* set of outtakes. Most fans are genuinely excited about the prospect of a second volume of unreleased material. However, considering the hodgepodge nature of *Crystal Ball* and the inconsistency of its material, the question is whether the strongest, first-rate tracks will be chosen for inclusion on a second volume and if all the mistakes of the *Crystal Ball* project can be avoided. This article offers some ideas for the projected follow-up and discusses the songs that fans could vote for.



# body that Got

THE *Crystal Ball* THREE-CD SET was released in late January 1998. Fans had to wait for several months due to repeated delays so the eventual release became something of an anti-climax. Nearly everything on *Crystal Ball* had previously been bootlegged or heard in concert; "Cloreen Bacon Skin," "Make Your Mama Happy," "Poom Poom," and "Da Bang" were the only tracks that fans were unfamiliar with.

Unfortunately, the packaging and musical contents of *Crystal Ball* left a great deal to be desired. The set was a sprawling, patchy affair, hardly representative of Prince's 20-year career. Encompassing five remixes and 25 tracks, it concentrated on two time periods: the 1985-86 *Parade*/*Sign O' The Times* era and the 1993-96 years, which spawned *Come*, *The Love Experience*, *Chaos And Disorder*, and *Emancipation*. The only exception was "Cloreen Bacon Skin," which dated back to 1983.

Lacking cohesion and structure, the 30 tracks on *Crystal Ball* seemed almost randomly spread across the three discs with little or no regard for different time periods, sounds, moods, themes, or musical genres. Some tracks had been "polished" and updated with new instrumentation. Even some of the segues between songs were sloppy. Further, *Crystal Ball* inexplicably contained an edited version of a song, "Good Love," that appeared in a longer version elsewhere. Such gaffes only reinforced the impression that the record was thrown together too rapidly.

The inclusion of five remixes also received a great deal of criticism, as did "Cloreen Bacon Skin," a 15-minute track that was more of an unfinished demo or a throwaway jam than a completed track. Many fans were also disappointed by the fact that the discs only contained around 50 minutes of music; it would have been possible to fit the music onto two discs.

## Learning from *Crystal Ball*

Regardless of *Crystal Ball*'s warts-and-all quality, the compilation offered an excellent view into Prince's musical breadth, showcasing a multitude of musical influences and styles from pop, rock, and blues to funk, soul, hip-hop, and reggae. Among the highlights were the sensuous balladry of "Crucial," "So Dark," and "Goodbye"; the catchy blend of pop and funk of "Good Love," and "Acknowledgment"; the hard, energetic rock of "Interactive"; the more deliberate and melodic rock of "Strays Of The World" and "She Gave Her Angels"; the raw, urgent funk of "Hide The Bone"; and the laidback funky grooves of "18 & Over." Still, it cannot be denied that there were few truly outstanding songs, leading many critics to conclude that Prince's vault didn't contain as many gems as Prince would have us believe.

So, what can be done to avoid the mistakes of *Crystal Ball*? Assuming *Crystal Ball Volume II* will be released as a multi-CD set, it would definitely make sense to take a more chronological approach to avoid the confusing and frustrating structure of *Crystal Ball*. Each CD should focus on music from a particular time period much like what was done with Bruce Springsteen's meticulously assembled and lauded *Tracks* collection.

As with *Crystal Ball*, the *Volume II* set should be made available in stores, but people who buy it directly from 1-800-NEW-FUNK could be rewarded with the addition of a fourth disc, perhaps containing a live recording. The extra production cost is small, but a live CD would be a great incentive for fans to buy directly from 1-800-NEW-FUNK, which surely is in Prince's interest since these copies are likely to have the highest profit margin.

## Three discs

If we assume that a three-CD set is planned, the first disc could cover the pre-*Purple Rain* years, with well-known outtakes like "Lisa," "Purple Music," "Extra Loveable," "Turn It Up," and "Moonbeam Levels." It would also be interesting for most fans to hear the original 1981-82 versions of songs that later became classic when released on *Purple Rain*, *Around The World In A Day*, *Parade*, and *Sign O' The Times*: "I Could Never Take The Place Of Your Man," "Strange Relationship," "New Position," "Raspberry Beret," and "Baby, I'm A Star." This would provide unique insight into how the sound and production of Prince's music developed from his pre-*Purple Rain* period to the Revolution years. There are also numerous songs from Prince's earlier years that we fans have never heard. The first disc would really highlight Prince's growth as a songwriter and the evolution of his highly original synth-led "Minneapolis sound."

The second disc could focus on The Revolution era, a relatively brief time period but certainly one of the most creative of Prince's career, when he managed to combine massive popularity with some of his most adventurous "avant purple" music. It is also the most pop and rock-oriented period of Prince's career. Why not let the projected *Roadhouse Garden* album with The Revolution form the basis of the second disc? According to interviews with Prince, some of the tracks intended for this release include "Empty Room," "Splash," "Roadhouse Garden," "Witness 4 The Prosecution," "Wonderful Ass," and "All My Dreams." Other obvious candidates must be "A Place In Heaven," "In A Large Room With No Light," "Go," and "Big Tall Wall," all familiar to the fans. Several of these tracks were among the fans' favorites in *UPTOWN*'s 1999 poll (*UPTOWN* #40).

There are also several brilliant Revolution-era tracks that are less well-known amongst collectors, including the melodic and decidedly Beatlesque effort "Every Body Want What They Don't Got" and the catchy, upbeat "Teacher, Teacher," which is a pop number with a psychedelic touch added by Wendy and Lisa (the song was placed on early configurations of *Dream Factory*). Another superb effort is "Traffic Jam," a mid-tempo rock/funk instrumental based around a mesmerizing riff played alternately on guitar and synth. And why not include the original version of "Old Friends 4 Sale" (a version with revamped lyrics appeared on *Th Vault... Old Friends 4 Sale*)? Obviously, there is no shortage of strong, well-crafted pop/rock material from this particular period.

The third disc could be devoted to songs primarily from The NPG era of the '90s. Since so many 1993-96 tracks were released on *Crystal Ball*, it would make sense to add some late '80s tracks to the third disc. "Rebirth Of The Flesh," "The Line," "The Grand Progression," and "Dance With The Devil" are some of the fans' favorites from the post-Revolution/pre-NPG period. "Cosmic Day" from November 1986 is another candidate, being an energetic rocker sung in Prince's speeded-up Camille voice. Interestingly, "Cosmic Day" features a guitar line (replacing a sung chorus) that resembles the main riff of George Harrison's 1970 hit "What Is Love?," which may or may not be one reason why Prince chose to withhold the song when he assembled *Sign O' The Times*. Some of tracks from the '90 that deserve to see the light of day include: "Schoolyard," "Eye Can't Love U Anymore," "The Ryde Dyvine," "Mad," "2020," and "Snowman."





## 17 songs

Fans who visited Paisley Park during the "Prince Celebration" week were able to vote for songs for the projected *Crystal Ball Volume II*. They could choose from a list of 22 pre-selected titles, including such well-known tracks as "Turn It Up," "Others Here With Us," "Electric Intercourse," and "Girl O' My Dreams," as well as the previously released "Girl" and "Gotta Stop (Messin' About)." Several titles were completely unknown to the majority of fans. In some instances, fans recognised the titles (many were listed in the appendix of *DanceMusicSexRomance*, for example), but they had not heard the songs in question.

The poll results were assembled and NPGonlineLTD published a list after the "Prince Celebration" week, "The Top 17 songs chosen for the *Crystal Ball Volume II* project." The songs were:

- ✓ "Electric Intercourse"
- ✓ "Love And Sex"
- ✓ "Xtraloveable"
- ✓ "3 Nigs Watchin' A Kung-Fu Movie"
- ✓ "Evolsidog"
- ✓ "Adonis And Batsheeba"
- ✓ "Eye Wonder"
- ✓ "Others Here With Us"
- ✓ "American Jam"
- ✓ "Lust U Always"
- ✓ "Strange Way Of Saying Eye Love U"
- ✓ "Everybody Want What They Don't Got"
- ✓ "Girl O' My Dreams"
- ✓ "U're All Eye Want"
- ✓ "Turn It Up"
- ✓ "Kiss – Xtended Version"
- ✓ "Katrina's Paper Dolls"

Note that the titles of some of the songs have been revamped. Thus, "Extra Loveable" is now called "Xtraloveable" for example. Five songs did not make the Top 17: "She's Just A Baby," "Gotta Stop (Messin' About)," "If It'll Make U Happy," "Come Electra Tuesday," and "Girl."

Several of the songs on the Top 17 list date back to 1980–81–82: "Xtraloveable," "American Jam," "Lust U Always," "Strange Way Of Saying Eye Love U," "Girl O' My Dreams," "U're All Eye Want," and "Turn It Up." Most of these are circulating amongst collectors and have been described and discussed in *UPTOWN's* *TURN IT UP* book and the *Grooves And Grooves Upon The Shelf* feature in this issue.

"American Jam" is from the *Dirty Mind* era, being recorded in the rented Lake

Minnetonka home Prince was living in while working on *Dirty Mind* in the spring and summer of 1980. "American Jam" was taped around the time of "When You Were Mine" and "Gotta Broken Heart Again"; this session also yielded a track called "Eros," another *Dirty Mind* leftover.

Taped in January 1982, "U're All Eye Want" is a fast, blues-based rockabilly-style rocker with a raw, dirty guitar upfront. The song is the musical blueprint for "Horny Toad." Prince sings a repeated motif that became the lead synth line of "Horny Toad" and there are many melodic similarities. To some degree, the song also resembles "Jack U Off," featuring a similar arrangement with the guitar to the fore and live drumming (as opposed to the synth texture and drum machine of "Horny Toad").

The 1983–86 Revolution years are represented by several tracks: "Electric Intercourse," "Love And Sex," "Evolsidog," "Adonis And Batsheeba," "Others Here With Us," and "Everybody Want What They Don't Got." Prince appears to have chosen mostly songs with fairly limited input by Wendy and Lisa, which indicates that the *Roadhouse Garden* project will focus on the recordings that feature the most prominent Wendy and Lisa contributions and influences.

Originally intended for *Purple Rain*, "Electric Intercourse" was discarded in favour of "The Beautiful Ones." It was recorded during the August 3rd First Avenue concert. No studio recording of the song is known to exist. "Love And Sex" was recorded at Sunset Sound in February 1984 (incidentally, on the same day as the superior "Traffic Jam"). It was later revamped and considered for use on Sheila E.'s third solo album. It is not difficult to see why it was left off her album, as it is a somewhat mediocre outing that offers little in the way of a melody or a funky groove. "Love And Sex" is a fast, stomping number with an odd, shouted vocal by Prince.

"Others Here With Us" and "Evolsidog" were recorded during the initial *Parade* sessions at Sunset Sound in April 1985. "Others Here With Us" was left off *Parade* when Prince continued recording material for the album. Interviewed for Per Nilsen's *DanceMusicSexRomance* book, Susan Rogers described "Evolsidog" as an uptempo dance number, "It was kind of reminiscent of James Brown's 'Living In America,' where he is listing cities in the US. One line says, 'Minneapolis, ya'll know you're the best of all cities.' After each city, he says, 'Evolsidog.' I'm certain it wasn't intended for an album, just something to dance to." David Z. Rivkin, also interviewed for *DanceMusicSexRomance*, described the song as "very psychedelic."

"Everybody Want What They Don't Got" was recorded at Sunset Sound in July 1986 when Prince was wrapping up work on *Dream Factory*. Remarkably, the poppy and cheerful song was recorded on the same day as "The Cross," which has got to be one of Prince's most raw and furious numbers ever. Despite the obvious musical merits of "Everybody Want What They Don't Got," it was not included





on the projected album. "Adonis And Batsheeba," meanwhile, was recorded in Prince's home studio later in July 1986 when Prince had completed the final version of *Dream Factory*. Susan Rogers remembers the song well, "It was sappy and just plain silly. I mean, there's romantic love and there's sappy love. This was pure saccharine. The chorus went 'Adonis and Batsheeba in a garden of love' and then this harp came on. I was sitting there as quietly as possible but I had a laughing fit and just couldn't stop. And I was really embarrassed because I was sitting right next to Prince and he asked, 'What's the matter with you?'. I said, 'I'm sorry, I just think this song is really funny.' And he said, 'You don't like the harp?'. He would often ask us our opinion. I said, 'I've got to be truthful; I think the whole thing is just silly. I don't think it's worthy of your best work.' He didn't like criticism but we didn't work much longer on it."

"3 Nigs Watchin' A Kung-Fu Movie" is an instrumental from early 1987, recorded with Sheila E. (who named the track). Not much is known about "Katrina's Paper Dolls," but it is from the earlier part of the '80s. Although often believed to be from 1991, "Eye Wonder" may actually be a much older track. It is well known amongst collectors, but it was not amongst the 20 most popular outtakes in *UPTOWN's* 1999 poll.

## Conclusions

What conclusions can be drawn from the proposed 17 titles, assuming that they are likely to be included on *Crystal Ball Volume II*? First of all, it is clear that Prince has dug much deeper into the vault, unearthing many songs from the early '80s, which were lacking from *Crystal Ball* with the exception of "Cloreen Bacon Skin." The decision to include tracks from the early years of Prince's career is highly commendable and completely in line with our reasoning.

However, considerably less pleasing is the possible inclusion of an extended version of "Kiss." After all, the remixes was one of the most-criticised aspects of *Crystal Ball*. Why not learn from this? "Kiss" is a fantastic song, but do we really need an extended version? And, besides, isn't this the same as the previously released "Extended Version"? Anyway, let's just hope it is not another dance remix, assembled years after "Kiss" was created.

It is notable that songs like "Evsidog," "Adonis And Batsheeba," "Love And Sex," and "3 Nigs Watchin' A Kung-Fu Movie" were never considered strong enough for inclusion on any albums, essentially having been recorded in between projects. In most cases, songs like these were not given the same amount of time and care as the songs that were released. To some extent, they can be considered quick throwaways, not unlike "Da Bang," "Poom Poom," and "Make Your Mama Happy" on *Crystal Ball* (unquestionably three of the least substantial tracks). Obvi-

ously, Prince's criteria for selecting material is very personal and probably has more to do with his feelings towards a particular song or the circumstances surrounding its recording than "objective" musical merits, which may be of greater concern to the fans and critics. Because of this, it would make sense to combine material chosen by Prince with songs picked by the fans; this would result in a more complete, representative compilation.

Of course, allowing fans to vote for songs to include on *Crystal Ball Volume II* was a tremendous idea, which we promoted in our discussion of the *Crystal Ball* three-CD set (*UPTOWN* #32). Still, the Paisley Park poll was peculiar – what is the point of letting people vote for songs that they haven't heard and don't know anything about? How can you possibly have an opinion about a song you have never heard? And letting fans choose 17 titles from 22 pre-selected songs can hardly be called democratic or interactive, not least considering that Prince has in excess of 1,000 songs in his vault. Many fans got the impression that Prince already has made up his mind about the majority of songs but wanted his fans to feel that they are influencing the selection of songs.

Why not let fans from all over the world vote online at NPGonlineLTD? After all, not everyone was able to go to Minneapolis. An appealing idea would be to put up half or one-minute samples of some 100 songs on NPGonlineLTD and let the fans vote for their 10 favourites. Most of us would even be willing to pay a small sum to download the samples. This would make it possible for us to listen to all the songs, albeit briefly, including those we have never heard. Now, that would be interactive.

Prince has made rather contradictory statements regarding a second volume of *Crystal Ball*. In response to a question to NPGonlineLTD, he said on March 26th 2000, "There has been much talk of a *Crystal Ball II*... For now, it's just talk." Then, in the next "question and answer" session on NPGonlineLTD, May 5th, he said that the song "What Should Be Souled?" was "coming out on *Crystal Ball 2*." It should be noted that "What Should Be Souled?" was not among the 22 songs that fans could vote for. Regardless, it seems as if Prince has made his mind up about assembling a second volume. The question remains as to when and how it will be released and what the contents will be.

It is often frustrating being a Prince fan since we know what he is capable of and because he rarely does what we want him to do in terms of his career and music. Ultimately, though, in spite of our complaints and suggestions, most of us are thrilled at the prospect of a second volume of archive material, almost regardless of its contents.

By Per Nilsen and Lars Einarsson.



# THE LOST

One of *UPTOWN*'s primary ambitions is to document and analyse different aspects of Prince's work. Our book *DAYS OF WILD* charted his record releases, recording sessions, concerts, interviews, TV appearances, and countless other minor and major events in his life and career. This article provides new facts and information that we have been able to unearth since *DAYS OF WILD* was released in April 2000. The below details replace the information in the book relating to these particular songs, sessions, and projects. Needless to say, we have also discovered many typos and minor mistakes in *DAYS OF WILD* – these are listed on our website ([www.uptown.se](http://www.uptown.se)) and are not dealt with in this article. We plan to publish further updates in *UPTOWN* as our research continues.

## Diamonds And Pearls

"Diamonds And Pearls" features both Tommy Barbarella (keyboards) and Sonny Thompson (bass), none of whom was a member of Prince's band at the time of recording, late December 1989. Sheila E. also appears (uncredited) on "Diamonds And Pearls," playing synth drum fills. "Live 4 Love," taped around the same time, features Sonny (but not Tommy). Michael Bland is the drummer on "Diamonds And Pearls" and "Live 4 Love" (unlike Sonny and Tommy, Michael was a member of Prince's band at the time of recording). Michael, Sonny, and Tommy were also part of Flash/MC Flash (both names were used; the band was essentially Dr. Mambo's Combo), which was rehearsing at Paisley Park for a concert at Rupert's, April 30th 1990, as Prince's opening act. They also opened for Prince at the May 6th St. Paul Civic Center show that was set up at short notice. They went on the *Nude* tour as Mavis Staples' backing group and did a week-long stint as the house band at Glam Slam later in 1990.

The drum loop on "Daddy Pop" is lifted from Aretha Franklin's "Rock Steady." This is not credited on *Diamonds And Pearls*. Similarly, an important ingredient of "Gett Off" is an (uncredited) loop from En Vogue's "Hold On." The ending of "Daddy Pop" on *Diamonds And Pearls* is based on the closing segment of "Partyman" from the *Nude* show.

## Nude tour sessions

"Pain" for Rosie Gaines was recorded at Olympic Studios, London, 1990. These sessions with Rosie in London also included "Streetwalker," "In The Name Of Love," "Turn The Lights Down Low" (Bob Marley cover), and "My Tender Heart" (the only released track thus far). Several of the tracks were placed on *Concrete Jungle*, Rosie's planned 1994 album that was withdrawn when Paisley Park Records folded in 1994.

The Tokyo sessions on the *Nude* tour, late August/early September 1990, in-

cluded the taping of "Something Funky (This House Comes)" and "Five Women," later given to Joe Cocker, in addition to three tracks that ended up on *Diamonds And Pearls*: "Willing And Able," "Strollin'," and "Money Don't Matter 2 Night." The Tokyo sessions featured the core of Prince's band at the time, with Prince on keyboards/guitar, Levi Seacer Jr. on bass, and Michael Bland on drums.

"Horny Pony" was recorded at Paisley Park right after the *Nude* tour, September 1990. "Something Funky (This House Comes)" was reworked on the same day. "The Flow" and "Jughead" were recorded on the same day at Paisley Park after the *Nude* tour, September 1990. Another track recorded on this day was a remake of The Commodores' "Fancy Dancer," tentatively intended for a projected NPG project. Levi Seacer Jr. produced the session for "Fancy Dancer."

## 1991-92 sessions

Rosie Gaines co-wrote "The Voice" and "I Hear Your Voice" with Prince and Francis Jules (Rosie's husband at the time). Both songs were tracked on April 25th 1991 and were originally intended for Rosie's projected *Concrete Jungle* album. However, Prince later made "The Voice" the title track of Mavis Staples' second Paisley Park Records album and he gave "I Hear Your Voice" to Patti LaBelle.

The track Prince recorded in memory of Miles Davis, September 30th 1991, was originally titled "Letter 4 Miles." The title "Miles Is Not Dead" has also been used, but is not correct. The instrumental was recorded by Prince at the piano and Michael Bland behind the drums. Further instruments were subsequently added, including horns by The NPG Hornz.

The song "With This Tear" was originally intended for Jevetta Steele, but Prince gave it instead to Celine Dion (released on *Celine Dion*, March 31st 1992).

"Eye Wanna Melt With U" was originally planned for a maxi-single release of "7." Prince felt the song was so good that he decided to include it on *7*.



# IS FOUND



WB Records

## Melbourne, Sydney, and London 1992

Nearly everything for the *I'll Do Anything* project was recorded at Platinum Studios, Melbourne, mid-April 1992. Tracks confirmed to have been cut at Platinum Studios include: "The Rest Of My Life," "Be My Mirror," "There Is Lonely," "My Little Pill," and "Empty Room." The basic tracks were recorded by Prince, Levi Seacer Jr., Sonny Thompson, Tommy Barbarella, Michael Bland, and Kirk Johnson (on percussion). Three *I'll Do Anything* tracks were recorded with the band and The NPG Hornz at Sydney's Studios 301 on April 26th: "Poor Little Bastard," "Make Believe," and "I'll Do Anything."

Many of the songs attributed to Olympic Studios, London, June 18th 1992, were in fact tracked at Studios 301 in Sydney, late April 1992. This despite the fact that Olympic Studios is credited for several of the songs (including "Peach" and "Everybody Get On Up"). Most likely, the June 18th Olympic Studios session included work on some of the material committed to tape in Sydney, which may explain why the studio is credited. It has been confirmed that the Sydney sessions yielded: "Peach," "Everybody Get On Up," "A 1,000 Hugs And Kisses," "Goldnigga," and "Black MF In The House." Also recorded was a track for Kylie Minogue.

The June 18th Olympic Studios session probably included the recording of "Shhh," "Step 2 The Mic," and "51 Hours" (with Diamond and Pearl). Moni Love was present, adding raps to "Step 2 The Mic" and "Everybody Get On Up." Previously believed to have been recorded in London, "2gether" was actually a late addition to the *Goldnigga* album, recorded in April 1993. The song was included to give the album a single with some chart potential.

## Miscellaneous sessions and projects

A little-known Prince side project was an album with singer Jana Anderson, circa 1989. She was renamed Jana Jade by Prince and they worked on several songs,

including a track called "Jana Jade's Army." She is featured as background singer on some tracks recorded in 1989, including TC Ellis' "Miss Thang" and tracks on The Time's *Pandemonium*. We are currently investigating the Jana Jade project and hope to be able to provide more details and insight in the future.

Most of the songs for the Flash/MC Flash project were recorded with Sheila E. behind the drums (i.e. the tracks featuring live drumming). Michael Bland plays drums on a few of the tracks. Prince plays nearly everything else.

The Flash/MC Flash song previously known as "Goodbye" is in fact called "Good Body Every Evening." Similarly, the correct title of "Kenny" is "Whistlin' Kenny," which actually was released as the B-side on a cassette single of "Standing At The Altar," attributed to Margie Cox (Prince is listed as composer and producer).

On September 28th 1991, Prince and Eric Leeds recorded an instrumental track called "Boom Box." Prince's idea was that they would embark on a new Mad-house-style project. The name of the "group" would be Brass Monkey. However, no further sessions for the project followed and the idea was soon abandoned.

"Slave 2 The System" (instead of "The Good Life" as listed in *DAYS OF WILD*) was part of the initial seven-song session for *Exodus*. "The Good Life" was recorded during a later session for the album. The vocals on "Proud Mary," taped during sessions for *Exodus*, belong to Sonny Thompson and Derek Hughes.

The last two sessions with most of the 1994-96 line-up of The NPG (Sonny Thompson, Tommy Barbarella, Morris Hayes, Michael Bland) were held at Paisley Park in late February 1996. They recorded "Sarah," "Da Bang," "Into The Light," and "I Will." Sonny and Michael also participated in some sessions at South Beach Studios in Miami in late March, when Prince wrapped up work on *Chaos And Disorder*. This was after the band members' contracts had been terminated.

By Per Nilsen and Duane Tudahl, with thanks to Alan Freed.



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**DAYS OF WILD** is a detailed chronology of Prince/♂, chronicling all the important events in his life and career, until January 1st 2000. It takes the format of a year-by-year diary, chronicling record releases, recording sessions, concerts, TV appearances, interviews, etc. The book was previously published in 1990 and 1993 as *Prince: A Documentary*. The new edition is completely revised (re-written from scratch) and fully updated to include all minor and major events until 2000.

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The entire *UPTOWN* staff has been involved in the project, researching and contributing information and by examining texts and proof-reading. According to *UPTOWN*'s editor-in-chief, Per Nilsen, *DAYS OF WILD* is infinitely much more accurate, comprehensive, and detailed than the 1990 and 1993 versions of *A Documentary*, "There's no comparison. We've unearthed so many new details and unknown info since the last edition was published. For one thing, *DAYS OF WILD* contains much more details on when/where different songs were recorded and which musicians play on the songs. This particular aspect – recording data – is one of the strengths of *DAYS OF WILD*. I always felt this was one of the weaknesses of *A Documentary*, since I didn't have enough information back then. Anyone who read *DanceMusicSexRomance* [published by Firefly, 1999] and want to find out what happened after the book ends (1987) should be interested in *DAYS OF WILD*. We interviewed several engineers and musicians that The Artist has worked with in the '90s, which resulted in new insight on many projects."

*DAYS OF WILD* is A4-sized, **120 pages**, with a full-colour cover. It features many previously unseen photographs and unique memorabilia. The book will be available by mail order only from *UPTOWN*. The edition is limited to 3,000 copies.

The price of *DAYS OF WILD* – the book and CD-ROM (they are *not* available separately) – is equivalent to the cost of an annual subscription to *UPTOWN*: USA: \$50, Great Britain: £30, Japan: ¥6000, Australia: AUS\$80, Germany DM90, France F300, Spain: 8.000 ptas, Italy: L. 90.000, Switzerland: 70 CHF, Austria: 600 schilling, Holland: f100, Belgium: Bfr 1800, Sweden: 250 SEK, Norway: 250 NOK, Denmark: 250 DEK, Finland: 200 FIM, Iceland: 2.500 ISK. (It should be noted that the cost of air mail to countries outside of Europe accounts for approx. a quarter to a third of the price!)

*DAYS OF WILD* is produced by the *UPTOWN* team. *UPTOWN* is an independent collective run by fans of the Artist formerly known as Prince. *UPTOWN* is in no way affiliated with, authorized by, or connected to the Artist formerly known as Prince, Paisley Park, NPG Records, or Warner Bros. Records. The contents and opinions expressed by *UPTOWN* have not been approved for publication by the Artist formerly known as Prince or anyone in his employ.

The magazine is produced by fans for fans, and is independent and uncensored.

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